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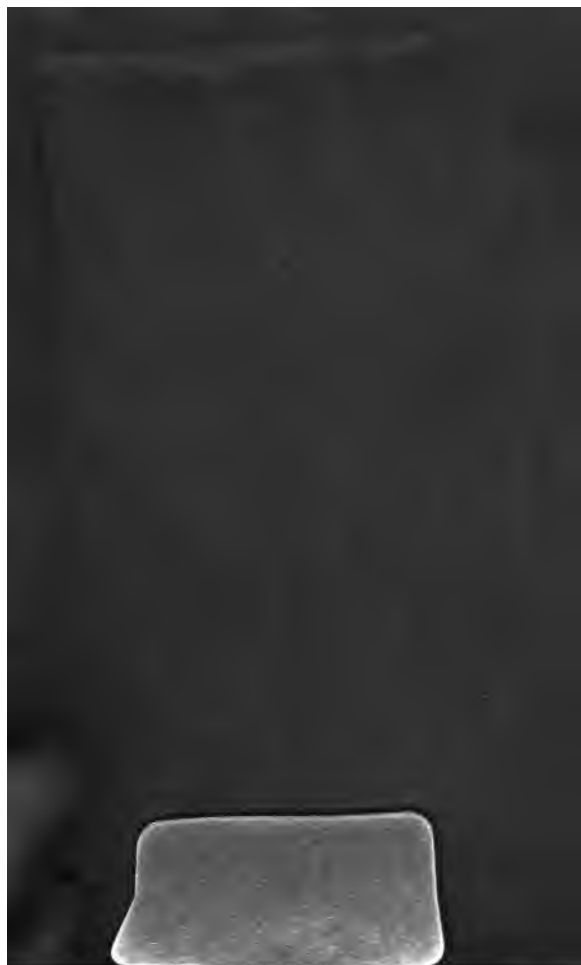
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Diana Henderson

THE
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VOL. V.

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THE *Macdonald*

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VOL. V.

THOMSON.
YOUNG.
COLLINS.
GOLDSMITH. .

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THOMSON.

CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.



YOUNG.

THE LAST DAY,

ETC.





THOMSON.
CASTLE OF INDOLENCE,
ETC.



Not to move on, perdie, is all they can:
 For do their very best they cannot fly.—
Canto I.



THE
CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

CANTO I.

The castle height of Indolence,
And its false luxury ;
Where for a little time, alas !
We lived right jollily.

I.

O MORTAL man, who livest here by toil,
Do not complain of this thy hard estate ;
That like an emmet thou must ever moil,
Is a sad sentence of an ancient date ;
And, certes, there is for it reason great ; [wail,
For, though sometimes it makes thee weep and
And curse thy star, and early drudge and late ;
Withouten that would come an heavier bale,
Loose life, unruly passions, and diseases pale.

II.

In lowly dale, fast by a river's side,
With woody hill o'er hill encompass'd round,
A most enchanting wizard did abide,
Than whom a fiend more fell is no where found.
It was, I ween, a lovely spot of ground ;
And there a season atween June and May,
Half pranked with spring, with summer half im-
brown'd,
A listless climate made, where, sooth to say,
No living wight could work, ne' cared ev'n for play.

III.

Was nought around but images of rest :
Sleep-soothing groves, and quiet lawns between ;
And flowery beds that slumberous influence kest,
From poppies breathed ; and beds of pleasant
green,
Where never yet was creeping creature seen.
Meantime, unnumber'd glittering streamlets
play'd,
And hurled every-where their waters sheen ;
That, as they bicker'd through the sunny shade,
Though restless still themselves, a lulling murmur
made.

IV.

Join'd to the prattle of the purling rills,
Were heard the lowing herds along the vale,
And flocks loud-bleating from the distant hills,
And vacant shepherds piping in the dale :
And, now and then, sweet Philomel would wail,
Or stock-doves plain amid the forest deep,
That drowsy rustled to the sighing gale ;
And still a coil the grasshopper did keep ;
Yet all these sounds yblent inclined all to sleep.

V.

Full in the passage of the vale, above,
A sable, silent, solemn forest stood ; [move,
Where nought but shadowy forms was seen to
As Idless fancied in her dreaming mood :
And up the hills, on either side, a wood
Of blackening pines, aye waving to and fro,
Sent forth a sleepy horror through the blood ;
And where this valley winded out, below,
The murmuring main was heard, and scarcely heard,
to flow.

VI.

A pleasing land of drowsy-head it was,
Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye ;
And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,
For ever flushing round a summer-sky :
There eke the soft delights, that witchingly
Instil a wanton sweetness through the breast,
And the calm pleasures always hover'd nigh ;
But whate'er smack'd of noyance, or unrest,
Was far, far off expell'd from this delicious nest.

VII.

The landskip such, inspiring perfect ease,
Where Indolence (for so the wizard hight)
Close-hid his castle 'mid embowering trees,
That half shut out the beams of Phœbus bright,
And made a kind of checker'd day and night ;
Meanwhile, unceasing at the massy gate,
Beneath a spacious palm, the wicked wight
Was placed ; and to his lute, of cruel fate
And labour harsh, complain'd, lamenting man's
estate.

VIII.

Thither continual pilgrims crowded still,
From all the roads of earth that pass there by :
For, as they chaunced to breathe on neighbouring
hill,
The freshness of this valley smote their eye,
And drew them ever and anon more nigh ;
Till clustering round the enchanter false they
Ymolten with his syren melody ; [hung,
While o'er the enfeebling lute his hand he flung,
And to the trembling chords these tempting verses
sung :—

IX.

‘ Behold ! ye pilgrims of this earth, behold !
See all but man with unearn’d pleasure gay :
See her bright robes the butterfly unfold,
Broke from her wintry tomb in prime of May !
What youthful bride can equal her array ?
Who can with her for easy pleasure vie ?
From mead to mead with gentle wing to stray,
From flower to flower on balmy gales to fly,
Is all she has to do beneath the radiant sky.

X.

‘ Behold the merry minstrels of the morn,
The swarming songsters of the careless grove,
Ten thousand throats ! that, from the flowering
thorn,
Hymn their good God, and carol sweet of love,
Such grateful kindly raptures them emove :
They neither plough, nor sow ; ne, fit for flail,
E’er to the barn the noddens sheaves they drove ;
Yet theirs each harvest dancing in the gale,
Whatever crowns the hill, or smiles along the vale.

XI.

‘ Outcast of nature, man ! the wretched thrall
Of bitter-dropping sweat, of sweltry pain,
Of cares that eat away thy heart with gall,
And of the vices, an inhuman train,
That all proceed from savage thirst of gain :
For when hard-hearted interest first began
To poison earth, Astræa left the plain ;
Guile, violence, and murder seized on man,
And, for soft milky streams, with blood the rivers
ran.

XII.

' Come, ye, who still the cumberous lead of life
Push hard up hill ; but as the farthest steep
You trust to gain, and put an end to strife,
Down thunders 'back the stone with mighty
sweep,
And hurls your labours to the valley deep,
For ever vain : come, and, withouten fee,
I in oblivion will your sorrows steep,
Your cares, your toils ; will steep you in a sea
Of full delight : O come, ye weary wights, to me !

XIII.

' With me, you need not rise at early dawn,
To pass the joyless day in various stounds ;
Or, louting low, on upstart fortune fawn,
And sell fair honour for some paltry pounds ;
Or through the city take your dirty rounds,
To cheat, and dun, and lie, and visit pay,
Now flattering base, now giving secret wounds ;
Or prowl in courts of law for human prey,
In venal senate thief, or rob on broad highway.

XIV.

' No cocks, with me, to rustic labour call,
From village on to village sounding clear ;
To tardy swain no shrill-voiced matrons squall ;
No dogs, no babes, no wives, to stun your ear ;
No hammers thump ; no horrid blacksmith sear,
No noisy tradesmen your sweet slumbers start,
With sounds that are a misery to hear :
But all is calm, as would delight the heart
Of Sybarite of old, all nature, and all art.

XV.

' Here nought but candour reigns, indulgent ease,
Good-natured lounging, sauntering up and down :
They who are pleased themselves must always
 please ;
On others' ways they never squint a frown,
Nor heed what haps in hamlet or in town :
Thus, from the source of tender Indolence,
With milky blood the heart is overflown,
Is soothed and sweeten'd by the social sense ;
For interest, envy, pride, and strife are banish'd
 hence.

XVI.

' What, what is virtue, but repose of mind,
A pure ethereal calm, that knows no storm ;
Above the reach of wild ambition's wind,
Above those passions that this world deform,
And torture man, a proud malignant worm ?
But here, instead, soft gales of passion play,
And gently stir the heart, thereby to form
A quicker sense of joy ; as breezes stray [gay.
Across the enliven'd skies, and make them still more

XVII.

' The best of men have ever loved repose :
They hate to mingle in the filthy fray ;
Where the soul sours, and gradual rancour grows,
Imbitter'd more from peevish day to day.
Ev'n those whom fame has lent her fairest ray,
The most renown'd of worthy wights of yore,
From a base world at last have stolen away :
So Scipio, to the soft Cumæan shore
Retiring, tasted joy he never knew before.

XVIII.

' But if a little exercise you choose,
Some zest for ease, 'tis not forbidden here :
Amid the groves you may indulge the Muse,
Or tend the blooms, and deck the vernal year ;
Or softly stealing, with your watery gear,
Along the brooks, the crimson-spotted fry
You may delude : the whilst, amused, you hear
Now the hoarse stream, and now the zephyr's
sigh,
Attuned to the birds, and woodland melody.

XIX.

' O grievous folly ! to heap up estate,
Losing the days you see beneath the sun ;
When, sudden, comes blind unrelenting Fate,
And gives the untasted portion you have won,
With ruthless toil, and many a wretch undone,
To those who mock you, gone to Pluto's reign,
There with sad ghosts to pine, and shadows dun :
But sure it is of vanities most vain,
To toil for what you here untoiling may obtain.'

XX.

He ceased. But still their trembling ears retain'd
The deep vibrations of his witching song ;
That, by a kind of magic power, constrain'd
To enter in, pell-mell, the listening throng.
Heaps pour'd on heaps, and yet they slipt along,
In silent ease ; as when beneath the beam
Of summer-moons, the distant woods among,
Or by some flood all silver'd with the gleam,
The soft-embodied fays through airy portal stream :

XXI.

By the smooth demon so it order'd was,
And here his baneful bounty first began :
Though some there were who would not further
pass,
And his alluring baits suspected han.
The wise distrust the too fair-spoken man.
Yet through the gate they cast a wishful eye :
Not to move on, perdie, is all they can :
For, do their very best, they cannot fly,
But often each way look, and often sorely sigh.

XXII.

When this the watchful wicked wizard saw,
With sudden spring he leap'd upon them straight ;
And, soon as touch'd by his unhallow'd paw,
They found themselves within the cursed gate ;
Full hard to be repass'd, like that of Fate.
Not stronger were of old the giant-crew,
Who sought to pull high Jove from regal state ;
Though feeble wretch he seem'd, of sallow hue :
Certes, who bides his grasp, will that encounter rue.

XXIII.

For whomsoe'er the villain takes in hand,
Their joints unknit, their sinews melt apace ;
As lithe they grow as any willow-wand,
And of their vanish'd force remains no trace :
So when a maiden fair, of modest grace,
In all her buxom blooming May of charms,
Is seized in some losel's hot embrace,
She waxeth very weakly as she warms,
Then sighing yields her up to love's delicious harms.

XXIV.

Waked by the crowd, slow from his bench arose
 A comely full-spread porter, swoln with sleep :
 His calm, broad, thoughtless aspect breathed
 repose ;
 And in sweet torpor he was plunged deep,
 Ne could himself from ceaseless yawning keep ;
 While o'er his eyes the drowsy liquor ran, [peep :
 Through which his half-waked soul would faintly
 Then taking his black staff, he call'd his man,
 And roused himself as much as rouse himself he can.

XXV.

The lad leap'd lightly at his master's call :
 He was, to weet, a little roguish page,
 Save sleep and play who minded nought at all,
 Like most the untaught striplings of his age.
 'This boy he kept each band to disengage,
 Garters and buckles, task for him unfit,
 But ill-becoming his grave personage,
 And which his portly paunch would not permit ;
 So this same limber page to all performed it.

XXVI.

Meantime, the master-porter wide display'd
 Great store of caps, of slippers, and of gowns ;
 Wherewith he those who enter'd in, array'd
 Loose, as the breeze that plays along the downs,
 And waves the summer-woods when evening
 frowns.
 O fair undress, best dress ! it checks no vein,
 But every flowing limb in pleasure drowns, [fain,
 And heightens ease with grace. This done, right
 Sir porter sat him down, and turn'd to sleep again.

XXVII.

Thus easy robed, they to the fountain sped,
That in the middle of the court up-threw
A stream, high spouting from its liquid bed,
And falling back again in drizzly dew;
There each deep draughts, as deep he thirsted,
It was a fountain of nepenthe rare; [drew.
Whence, as Dan Homer sings, huge pleasaunce
And sweet oblivion of vile earthly care; [grew,
Fair gladsome waking thoughts, and joyous dreams
more fair.

XXVIII.

This right perform'd, all inly pleased and still,
Withouten tromp, was proclamation made:
'Ye sons of Indolence, do what you will;
And wander where you list, through hall or glade!
Be no man's pleasure for another staid;
Let each as likes him best his hours employ,
And cursed be he who minds his neighbour's trade!
Here dwells kind Ease and unproving Joy:
He little merits bliss who others can annoy.'

XXIX.

Straight of these endless numbers, swarming
As thick as idle motes in sunny ray, [round,
Not one eftsoons in view was to be found,
But every man stroll'd off his own glad way,
Wide o'er this ample court's black area,
With all the lodges that thereto pertain'd,
No living creature could be seen to stray;
While solitude, and perfect silence reign'd;
So that to think you dreamt you almost was con-
strain'd.

XXX.

As when a shepherd of the Hebrid-Isles,
Placed far amid the melancholy main,
(Whether it be lone fancy him beguiles,
Or that ærial beings sometimes deign
To stand, embodied, to our senses plain)
Sees on the naked hill, or valley low,
The whilst in ocean Phœbus dips his wain,
A vast assembly moving to and fro :
Then all at once in air dissolves the wondrous show.

XXXI.

Ye gods of quiet, and of sleep profound !
Whose soft dominion o'er this castle sways,
And all the widely-silent places round,
Forgive me, if my trembling pen displays
What never yet was sung in mortal lays.
But how shall I attempt such arduous string ?
I, who have spent my nights, and nightly days,
In this soul-deadening place, loose-loitering ?
Ah ! how shall I for this uprear my moulted wing ?

XXXII.

Come on, my Muse, nor stoop to low despair.
Thou imp of Jove, touch'd by celestial fire !
Thou yet shalt sing of war, and actions fair,
Which the bold sons of Britain will inspire ;
Of ancient bards thou yet shalt sweep the lyre ;
Thou yet shalt tread in tragic pall the stage,
Paint love's enchanting woes, the hero's ire,
The sage's calm, the patriot's noble rage, [age.
Dashing corruption down through every worthless

XXXIII.

The doors, that knew no shrill alarming bell,
Ne cursed knocker plied by villain's hand,
Self-open'd into halls, where, who can tell
What elegance and grandeur wide expand
The pride of 'Turkey and of Persia laud?
Soft quilts on quilts, on carpets carpets spread,
And couches stretch'd around in seemly band ;
And endless pillows rise to prop the head ;
So that each spacious room was one full-swelling bed ;

XXXIV.

And every-where huge cover'd tables stood,
With wines high flavour'd and rich viands crown'd :
Whatever sprightly juice or tasteful food
On the green bosom of this earth are found,
And all old Ocean genders in his round :
Some hand unseen these silently display'd,
Ev'n undemanded by a sign or sound ;
You need but wish, and, instantly obey'd,
Fair ranged the dishes rose, and thick the glasses
play'd.

XXXV.

Here freedom reign'd, without the least alloy ;
Nor gossip's tale, nor ancient maiden's gall,
Nor saintly spleen, durst murmur at our joy,
And with envenom'd tongue our pleasures pall.
For why ? there was but one great rule for all ;
To wit, that each should work his own desire,
And eat, drink, study, sleep, as it may fall,
Or melt the time in love, or wake the lyre,
And carol what, unbid, the Muses might inspire.

XXXVI.

The rooms with costly tapestry were hung,
Where was inwoven many a gentle tale ;
Such as of old the rural poets sung,
Or of Arcadian or Sicilian vale :
Reclining lovers, in the lonely dale,
Pour'd forth at large the sweetly-tortured heart ;
Or, sighing tender passion, swell'd the gale,
And taught charm'd Echo to resound their smart ;
While flocks, woods, streams around, repose and
peace impart.

XXXVII.

Those pleased the most, where, by a cunning hand,
Depainted was the patriarchal age ;
What time Dan Abraham left the Chaldee land,
And pastured on from verdant stage to stage,
Where fields and fountains fresh could best engage.
Toil was not then : of nothing took they heed,
But with wild beasts the sylvan war to wage,
And o'er vast plains their herds and flocks to feed :
Bless'd sons of nature they ! true golden age indeed !

XXXVIII.

Sometimes the pencil, in cool airy halls,
Bade the gay bloom of vernal landscapes rise,
Or autumn's varied shades imbrown the walls :
Now the black tempest strikes the astonish'd eyes ;
Now down the steep the flashing torrent flies ;
The trembling sun now plays o'er ocean blue,
And now rude mountains frown amid the skies ;
Whate'er Lorraine light-touch'd with softening
hue,
Or savage Rosa dash'd, or learned Poussin drew.

XXXIX.

Each sound too here to languishment inclined,
Lull'd the weak bosom, and induced ease :
Aërial music in the warbling wind,
At distance rising oft, by small degrees,
Nearer and nearer came, till o'er the trees
It hung, and breathed such soul-dissolving airs,
As did, alas ! with soft perdition please :
Entangled deep in its enchanting snares,
The listening heart forgot all duties and all cares.

XL.

A certain music, never known before,
Here lull'd the pensive melancholy mind ;
Full easily obtain'd. Behoves no more,
But sidelong, to the gently-waving wind,
To lay the well-tuned instrument reclined ;
From which, with airy flying fingers light,
Beyond each mortal touch the most refined,
The god of winds drew sounds of deep delight :
Whence, with just cause, the harp of Æolus it hight.

XLI.

Ah me ! what hand can touch the string so fine ?
Who up the lofty diapason roll
Such sweet, such sad, such solemn airs divine,
Then let them down again into the soul ?
Now rising love they fann'd ; now pleasing dole
They breathed, in tender musings, through the
heart ;
And now a graver sacred strain they stole,
As when seraphic hands a hymn impart,
Wild-warbling nature all, above the reach of art !

XLII.

Such the gay splendor, the luxurious state,
Of Caliphs old, who on the 'Tigris' shore,
In mighty Bagdat, populous and great,
Held their bright court, where was of ladies store ;
And verse, love, music, still the garland wore :
When sleep was coy, the bard, in waiting there,
Cheer'd the lone midnight with the Muse's lore :
Composing music bade his dreams be fair,
And music lent new gladness to the morning air.

XLIII.

Near the pavilions where we slept, still ran
Soft-tinkling streams, and dashing waters fell,
And sobbing breezes sigh'd, and oft began
(So work'd the wizard) wintry storms to swell,
As heaven and earth they would together mell:
At doors and windows, threatening seem'd to call
The demons of the tempest, growling fell,
Yet the least entrance found they none at all ;
Whence sweeter grew our sleep, secure in massy hall.

XLIV.

And hither Morpheus sent his kindest dreams,
Raising a world of gayer tinct and grace ;
O'er which were shadowy cast Elysian gleams,
That play'd, in waving lights, from place to place,
And shed a roseate smile on Nature's face.
Not Titian's pencil e'er could so array,
So fleece with clouds the pure ethereal space ;
Ne could it e'er such melting forms display,
As loose on flowery beds all languishingly lay.

XLV.

No, fair illusions! artful phantoms, no!
My Muse will not attempt your fairy-land :
She has no colours that like you can glow :
To catch your vivid scenes too gross her hand.
But sure it is, was ne'er a subtler band
Than these same guileful angel-seeming sprites,
Who thus in dreams, voluptuous, soft, and bland,
Pour'd all the Arabian heaven upon our nights,
And bless'd them oft besides with more refined
delights.

XLVI.

They were, in sooth, a most enchanting train,
Ev'n feigning virtue; skilful to unite
With evil good, and strew with pleasure pain.
But for those fiends, whom blood and broils
delight ;
Who hurl the wretch, as if to hell outright,
Down, down black gulphs, where sullen waters
sleep,
Or hold him clambering all the fearful night
On beetling cliffs, or pent in ruins deep ;
They, till due time should serve, were bid far hence
to keep.

XLVII.

Ye guardian spirits, to whom man is dear,
From these foul demons shield the midnight
Angels of fancy and of love, be near, [gloom :
And o'er the blank of sleep diffuse a bloom :
Evoke the sacred shades of Greece and Rome,
And let them virtue with a look impart :
But chief, awhile, O ! lend us from the tomb
Those long-lost friends for whom in love we smart,
And fill with pious awe and joy-mixt woe the heart.

XLVIII.

Or are you sportive——Bid the morn of youth
 Rise to new light, and beam afresh the days
 Of innocence, simplicity, and truth;
 To cares estranged, and manhood's thorny ways.
 What transport, to retrace our boyish plays,
 Our easy bliss, when each thing joy supplied;
 The woods, the mountains, and the warbling maze
 Of the wild brooks!—but, fondly wandering
 wide,
 My Muse, resume the task that yet doth thee abide.

XLIX.

One great amusement of our household was,
 In a huge crystal magic globe to spy,
 Still as you turn'd it, all things that do pass
 Upon this ant-hill earth; where constantly
 Of idly-busy men the restless fry
 Run bustling to and fro with foolish haste,
 In search of pleasures vain that from them fly,
 Or which, obtain'd, the caitiffs dare not taste:—
 When nothing is enjoy'd, can there be greater waste?

L.

'Of vanity the mirrour' this was call'd :
 Here, you a muckworm of the town might see,
 At his dull desk, amid his ledgers stall'd,
 Eat up with carking care and penurie;
 Most like to carcase parch'd on gallow-tree.
 'A penny saved is a penny got :'
 Firm to this scoundrel maxim keepeth he,
 Ne of its rigour will he bate a jot,
 'Till it has quench'd his fire, and banished his pot.

LI.

Straight from the filth of this low grub, behold !
Comes fluttering forth a gaudy spendthrift heir,
All glossy gay, enamell'd all with gold,
The silly tenant of the summer-air,
In folly lost, of nothing takes he care ;
Pimps, lawyers, stewards, harlots, flatterers vile,
And thieving tradesmen him among them share :
His father's ghost from limbo-lake, the while,
Sees this, which more damnation doth upon him pile.

LII.

This globe pourtray'd the race of learned men,
Still at their books, and turning o'er the page,
Backwards and forwards : oft they snatch the pen,
As if inspired, and in a Thespian rage ;
Then write, and blot, as would your ruth engage.
Why, authors, all this scrawl and scribbling sore ?
To lose the present, gain the future age,
Praised to be when you can hear no more,
And much enrich'd with fame, when useless worldly
store.

LIII.

Then would a splendid city rise to view,
With carts, and cars, and coaches roaring all :
Wide-pour'd abroad behold the giddy crew :
See how they dash along from wall to wall !
At every door, hark how they thundering call !
Good Lord ! what can this giddy rout excite ?
Why, on each other with fell tooth to fall ;
A neighbour's fortune, fame, or peace to blight,
And make new tiresome parties for the coming
night.

LIV.

The puzzling sons of party next appear'd,
In dark cabals and nightly juntos met ; [rear'd
And now they whisper'd close, now shrugging
The important shoulder ; then, as if to get
New light, their twinkling eyes were inward set.
No sooner Lucifer ¹ recalls affairs,
'Than forth they various rush in mighty fret ;
When lo ! push'd up to power, and crown'd their
cares,
In comes another set, and kicketh them down stairs.

LV.

But what most show'd the vanity of life,
Was to behold the nations all on fire,
In cruel broils engaged, and deadly strife :
Most Christian kings, inflamed by black desire,
With honourable ruffians in their hire,
Cause war to rage, and blood around to pour ;
Of this sad work when each begins to tire,
Then sit them down just where they were before,
Till for new scenes of woe peace shall their force
restore.

LVI.

To number up the thousands dwelling here,
An useless were, and eke an endless task ;
From kings, and those who at the helm appear,
To gipsies brown in summer-glades who bask.
Yea, many a man, perdie, I could unmask,
Whose desk and table make a solemn show,
With tape-tied trash, and suits of fools that ask
For place or pension laid in decent row ;
But these I passen by, with nameless numbers moe .

¹ The Morning Star.

LX.

With him was sometimes join'd, in silent walk,
 (Profoundly silent, for they never spoke)
 One ^a shyer still, who quite detested talk :
 Oft, stung by spleen, at once away he broke,
 To groves of pine, and broad o'ershadowing oak ;
 There, inly thrill'd, he wander'd all alone,
 And on himself his pensive fury wroke,
 Ne ever utter'd word, save when first shone
 The glittering star of eve—'Thank Heaven ! the
 day is done.'

LXI.

Here lurk'd a wretch, who had not crept abroad
 For forty years, ne face of mortal seen ;
 In chamber brooding like a loathly toad :
 And sure his linen was not very clean.
 Through secret loop-holes, that had practised
 been
 Near to his bed, his dinner vile he took ;
 Unkempt, and rough, of squalid face and mien,
 Our castle's shame ! whence, from his filthy nook,
 We drove the villain out for fitter lair to look.

LXII.

One day there chaunced into these halls to rove
 A joyous youth, who took you at first sight ;
 Him the wild wave of pleasure hither drove,
 Before the sprightly tempest-tossing light :
 Certes, he was a most engaging wight,
 Of social glee, and wit humane, though keen,
 Turning the night to day, and day to night :
 For him the merry bells had rung, I ween,
 If in this nook of quiet bells had ever been.

^a Conjecture has applied this to Dr. Armstrong, the poet.

LXIII.

But not ev'n pleasure to excess is good :
 What most elates, then sinks the soul as low :
 When spring-tide joy pours in with copious flood,
 The higher still the exulting billows flow,
 The farther back again they flagging go,
 And leave us grovelling on the dreary shore :
 Taught by this son of joy, we found it so ;
 Who, whilst he staid, kept in a gay uproar
 Our madden'd castle all, the abode of sleep no more.

LXIV.

As when in prime of June a burnish'd fly,
 Sprung from the meads, o'er which he sweeps
 along,
 Cheer'd by the breathing bloom and vital sky,
 Tunes up amid these airy halls his song,
 Soothing at first the gay reposing throng :
 And oft he sips their bowl ; or, nearly drown'd,
 He, thence recovering, drives their beds among,
 And scares their tender sleep, with trump pro-
 found
 'Then out again he flies, to wing his mazy round.

LXV.

Another guest³ there was, of sense refined,
 Who felt each worth, for every worth he had ;
 Serene, yet warm ; humane, yet firm his mind ;
 As little touch'd as any man's with bad :
 Him through their inmost walks the Muses lad,
 To him the sacred love of Nature lent,
 And sometimes would he make our valley glad ;
 When as we found he would not here be pent,
 To him the better sort this friendly message sent :

³ George, Lord Lyttelton.

LXVI.

‘ Come, dwell with us ! true son of virtue, come !
 But if, alas ! we cannot thee persuade
 To lie content beneath our peaceful dome,
 Ne ever more to quit our quiet glade !
 Yet when at last thy toils but ill apaid
 Shall dead thy fire, and damp its heavenly spark,
 Thou wilt be glad to seek the rural shade,
 There to indulge the Muse, and Nature mark :
 We then a lodge for thee will rear in Hagley-Park.’

LXVII.

Here whilom ligg’d the Esopus ⁴ of the age ;
 But call’d by fame, in soul ypricked deep,
 A noble pride restored him to the stage,
 And roused him like a giant from his sleep.
 Ev’n from his slumbers we advantage reap :
 With double force the enliven’d scene he wakes,
 Yet quits not Nature’s bounds. He knows to keep
 Each due decorum : now the heart he shakes,
 And now with well urged sense the enlighten’d
 judgment takes.

LXVIII.

A bard here dwelt, more fat than bard beseeenis ;
 Who ⁵, void of envy, guile, and lust of gain,
 On virtue still, and nature’s pleasing themes,
 Pour’d forth his unpremeditated strain :
 The world forsaking with a calm disdain,
 Here laugh’d he careless in his easy seat ;
 Here quaff’d encircled with the joyous train,
 Oft moralizing sage : his ditty sweet
 He loathed much to write, ne cared to repeat.

⁴ Mr. Quin.

⁵ The following lines of this stanza were writ by a friend of the author, (since understood to have been Lord Lyttelton) and were designed to portray the character of Thomson.

LXIX.

Full oft by holy feet our ground was trod,
 Of clerks good plenty here you mote espy.
 A little, round, fat, oily man⁶ of God,
 Was one I chiefly mark'd among the fry :
 He had a roguish twinkle in his eye,
 And shone all glittering with ungodly dew,
 If a tight damsel chaunced to trippen by ;
 Which when observed, he shrunk into his mew,
 And straight would recollect his piety anew.

LXX.

Nor be forgot a tribe, who minded nought
 (Old inmates of the place) but state affairs :
 They looked, perdie, as if they deeply thought ;
 And on their brow sat every nation's eares ;
 The world by them is parcell'd out in shares.
 When in the Hall of Smoke they congress hold,
 And the sage berry sun-burnt Mocha bears
 Has clear'd their inward eye : then, smoke-
 enroll'd,
 Their oracles break forth mysterious as of old.

LXXI.

Here languid Beauty kept her pale-faced court :
 Bevies of dainty dames, of high degree,
 From every quarter hither made resort ;
 Where, from gross mortal care and business free,
 They lay, pour'd out in ease and luxury.
 Or should they a vain show of work assume,
 Alas ! and well-a-day ! what can it be ?
 To knot, to twist, to range the vernal bloom ;
 But far is cast the distaff, spinning-wheel, and loom.

⁶ The Rev. Mr. Murdoch, Thomson's friend and biographer.

LXXII.

Their only labour was to kill the time ;
 (And labour dire it is, and weary woe)
 They sit, they loll, turn o'er some idle rhyme ;
 Then, rising sudden, to the glass they go,
 Or saunter forth, with tottering step and slow :
 This soon too rude an exercise they find ;
 Straight on the couch their limbs again they throw,
 Where hours on hours they sighing lie reclined,
 And court the vapoury god, soft breathing in the
 wind⁷.

LXXIII.

Now must I mark the villany we found,
 But ah ! too late, we shall eftsoons be shown.
 A place here was, deep, dreary, under ground ;
 Where still our inmates, when displeasing grown,
 Diseased, and loathsome, privily were thrown :
 Far from the light of heaven, they languish'd there,
 Unpitied uttering many a bitter groan ;
 For of these wretches taken was no care :
 Fierce fiends, and hags of hell, their only nurses
 were.

7 After this stanza, the following was introduced, in the
 edition of 1746.

One nymph there was, methought, in bloom of May,
 On whom the idle fiend glanced many a look,
 In hopes to lead her down the slippery way
 To taste of Pleasure's deep deceitful brook :
 No virtues yet her gentle mind forsook ;
 No idle whims, no vapours fill'd her brain :
 But Prudence for her youthful guide she took,
 And Goodness, which no earthly vice could stain,
 Dwelt in her mind ; she was ne proud, I ween, or vain

LXXIV.

Alas ! the change ! from scenes of joy and rest,
To this dark den, where Sickness toss'd away.
Here Lethargy, with deadly sleep oppress,
Stretch'd on his back, a mighty lubbard, lay,
Heaving his sides, and snored night and day ;
To stir him from his traunce it was not eath,
And his half-open'd eyne he shut straightway :
He led, I wot, the softest way to death,
And taught withouten pain and strife to yield the
breath.

LXXV.

Of limbs enormous, but withal unsound,
Soft-swoln and pale, here lay the Hydropsy :
Unwieldy man ; with belly monstrous round,
For ever fed with watery supply ;
For still he drank, and yet he still was dry.
And moping here did Hypochondria sit,
Mother of Spleen, in robes of various dye,
Who vexed was full oft with ugly fit ;
And some her frantic deem'd, and some her deem'd
a wit.

LXXVI.

A lady proud she was; of ancient blood,
Yet oft her fear her pride made crouchen low :
She felt, or fancied in her fluttering mood,
All the diseases which the spittles know,
And sought all physic which the shops bestow,
And still new leeches and new drugs would try,
Her humour ever wavering to and fro : [cry,
For sometimes she would laugh, and sometimes
Then sudden waxed wroth, and all she knew not
why.

LXXVII.

Fast by her side a listless maiden pined,
With aching head, and squeamish heart-burn-
ings ;
Pale, bloated, cold, she seem'd to hate mankind,
Yet loved in secret all forbidden things.
And here the Tertian shakes his chilling wings ;
The sleepless Gout here counts the crowing
cocks,
A wolf now gnaws him, now a serpent stings ;
Whilst Apoplexy cram'd Intemperance knocks
Down to the ground at once, as butcher felleth ox.

These four concluding stanzas were claimed by Doctor
Armstrong, and inserted in his *Miscellanies*.

THE
CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

CANTO II.

The knight of arts and industry,
And his achievements fair;
That, by this Castle's overthrow,
Secured, and crowned were.

I.

ESCAPED the castle of the sire of sin,
Ah ! where shall I so sweet a dwelling find ?
For all around, without, and all within,
Nothing save what delightful was and kind,
Of goodness savouring and a tender mind,
E'er rose to view. But now another strain,
Of doleful note, alas ! remains behind :
I now must sing of pleasure turn'd to pain,
And of the false echanter, Indolence, complain.

II.

Is there no patron to protect the Muse,
And fence for her Parnassus' barren soil ?
To every labour its reward accrues,
And they are sure of bread who swink and toil ;
But a fell tribe the Aonian hive despoil,
As ruthless wasps oft rob the painful bee :
Thus while the laws not guard that noblest toil,
Ne for the Muses other meed decree,
They praised are alone, and starve right merrily.

III.

I care not, Fortune, what you me deny :
You cannot rob me of free Nature's grace ;
You cannot shut the windows of the sky,
Through which Aurora shows her brightening face ;
You cannot bar my constant feet to trace
The woods and lawns, by living stream, at eve :
Let health my nerves and finer fibres brace,
And I their toys to the great children leave :
Of fancy, reason, virtue, nought can me bereave.

IV.

Come then, my Muse, and raise a bolder song ;
Come, lig no more upon the bed of sloth,
Dragging the lazy languid line along,
Fond to begin, but still to finish loth,
Thy half-writ scrolls all eaten by the moth :
Arise, and sing that generous imp of fame,
Who with the sons of softness nobly wroth,
To sweep away this human lumber came,
Or in a chosen few to rouse the slumbering flame.

V.

In Fairy-Land there lived a knight of old,
Of feature stern, Selvaggio well yclep'd,
A rough unpolish'd man, robust and bold,
But wondrous poor : he neither sow'd nor reap'd,
Ne stores in summer for cold winter heap'd ;
In hunting all his days away he wore ;
Now scorch'd by June, now in November steep'd,
Now pinch'd by biting January sore,
He still in woods pursued the libbard and the boar.

VI.

As he one morning, long before the dawn,
Prick'd through the forest to dislodge his prey,
Deep in the winding bosom of a lawn,
With wood wild-fringed, he mark'd a taper's ray,
That from the beating rain, and wintry fray,
Did to a lonely cot his steps decoy;
There, up to earn the needments of the day,
He found dame Poverty, nor fair nor coy:
Her he compress'd, and fill'd her with a lusty boy.

VII.

Amid the green-wood shade this boy was bred,
And grew at last a knight of muchel fame,
Of active mind and vigorous lustyhed,
The Knight of Arts and Industry by name:
Earth was his bed, the boughs his roof did frame;
He knew no beverage but the flowing stream;
His tasteful well-earn'd food the sylvan game,
Or the brown fruit with which the woodlands
teem:

The same to him glad summer, or the winter breme.

VIII.

So pass'd his youthly morning, void of care,
Wild as the colts that through the commons run:
For him no tender parents troubled were:
He of the forest seem'd to be the son;
And, certes, had been utterly undone,
But that Minerva pity of him took,
With all the gods that love the rural wonne,
That teach to tame the soil and rule the crook;
Ne did the sacred Nine disdain a gentle look.

IX.

Of fertile genius him they nurtured well,
In every science, and in every art,
By which mankind the thoughtless brutes excel,
That can or use, or joy, or grace impart,
Disclosing all the powers of head and heart :
Ne were the goodly exercises spared,
That brace the nerves, or make the limbs alert,
And mix elastic force with firmness hard :
Was never knight on ground mote be with him
compared.

X.

Sometimes, with early morn, he mounted gay
The hunter-steed, exulting o'er the dale,
And drew the roseat breath of orient day ;
Sometimes, retiring to the secret vale,
Yclad in steel, and bright with burnish'd mail,
He strain'd the bow, or toss'd the sounding spear,
Or darting on the goal, outstripp'd the gale,
Or wheel'd the chariot in its mid career, [peer.
Or strenuous wrestled hard with many a tough com .

XI.

At other times he pried through Nature's store,
Whate'er she in the ethereal round contains,
Whate'er she hides beneath her verdant floor,
The vegetable and the mineral reigns ;
Or else he scann'd the globe, those small domains,
Where restless mortals such a turmoil keep,
Its seas, its floods, its mountains, and its plains ;
But more he search'd the mind, and roused from
sleep
Those moral seeds whence we heroic actions reap.

XII.

Nor would he scorn to stoop from high pursuits
 Of heavenly truth, and practise what she taught.
 Vain is the tree of knowledge without fruits!
 Sometimes in hand the spade or plough he caught,
 Forth-calling all with which boon Earth is fraught;
 Sometimes he plied the strong mechanic tool,
 Or rear'd the fabric from the finest draught;
 And oft he put himself to Neptune's school,
 Fighting with winds and waves on the vext ocean-
 pool.

XIII.

To solace then these rougher toils, he tried
 To touch the kindling canvass into life;
 With Nature his creating pencil vied,
 With Nature joyous at the mimic strife:
 Or, to such shapes as graced Pygmalion's wife
 He hew'd the marble; or, with varied fire,
 He roused the trumpet, and the martial fife,
 Or bade the lute sweet tenderness inspire,
 Or verses framed that well might wake Apollo's lyre.

XIV.

Accomplish'd thus, he from the woods issued,
 Full of great aims, and bent on bold emprise;
 The work, which long he in his breast had
 brew'd,
 Now to perform he ardent did devise;
 To wit, a barbarous world to civilize.
 Earth was till then a boundless forest wild;
 Nought to be seen but savage wood, and skies;
 No cities nourish'd arts, no culture smiled,
 No government, no laws, no gentle manners mild.

XV.

A rugged wight, the worst of brutes, was man ;
On his own wretched kind he, ruthless, prey'd :
The strongest still the weakest over-ran ;
In every country mighty robbers sway'd,
And gulle and ruffian force were all their trade.
Life was a scene of rapine, want, and woe ;
Which this brave knight, in noble anger, made
To swear, he would the rascal rout o'erthrow,
For, by the powers divine, it should no more be so !

XVI.

It would exceed the purport of my song,
To say how this best sun, from orient climes,
Came beaming life and beauty all along,
Before him chasing indolence and crimes.
Still as he pass'd, the nations he sublimed,
And calls forth arts and virtues with his ray :
Then Egypt, Greece, and Rome, their golden times
Successive had ; but now in ruins grey
They lie, to slavish sloth and tyranny a prey.

XVII.

To crown his toils, Sir Industry then spread
The swelling sail, and made for Britain's coast.
A sylvan life till then the natives led,
In the brown shades and green-wood forest lost,
All careless rambling where it liked them most :
Their wealth the wild-deer bouncing through
the glade ;
They lodged at large, and lived at Nature's cost ;
Save spear, and bow, withouten other aid ;
Yet not the Roman steel their naked breast dismay'd.

XVIII.

He liked the soil, he liked the clement skies,
He liked the verdant hills and flowery plains :
' Be this my great, my chosen isle, (he cries)
This, whilst my labours Liberty sustains,
This queen of Ocean all assault disdains.'
Nor liked he less the genius of the land,
To freedom apt and persevering pains,
Mild to obey, and generous to command,
Temper'd by forming Heaven with kindest, firmest
hand.

XIX.

Here, by degrees, his master-work arose,
Whatever arts and industry can frame :
Whatever finish'd Agriculture knows,
Fair queen of arts ! from heaven itself who came,
When Eden flourish'd in unspotted fame :
And still with her sweet innocence we find,
And tender peace, and joys without a name,
That, while they ravish, tranquillize the mind :
Nature and Art at once, delight and use combined.

XX.

Then towns he quicken'd by mechanic arts,
And bade the fervent city glow with toil ;
Bade social Commerce raise renowned marts,
Join land to land, and marry soil to soil ;
Unite the poles, and without bloody spoil,
Bring home of either Ind the gorgeous stores ;
Or, should despotic rage the world embroil,
Bade tyrants tremble on remotest shores,
While o'er the encircling deep Britannia's thunder
roars.

XXI.

The drooping Muses then he westward call'd,
From the famed city¹ by Propontic sea,
What time the Turk the enfeebled Grecian thrall'd;
Thence from their cloister'd walks he set them
And brought them to another Castalie, [free,
Where Isis many a famous nursling breeds;
Or where old Cam soft-paces o'er the lea
In pensive mood, and tunes his Doric reeds,
The whilst his flocks at large the lonely shepherd
feeds.

XXII.

Yet the fine arts were what he finish'd least.
For why? They are the quintessence of all,
The growth of labouring time, and slow increased;
Unless, as seldom chances, it should fall
That mighty patrons the coy sisters call
Up to the sunshine of uncumber'd ease, [thrall,
Where no rude care the mounting thought may
And where they nothing have to do but please:
Ah! gracious God! thou know'st they ask no other
fees.

XXIII.

But now, alas! we live too late in time:
Our patrons now ev'n grudge that little claim,
Except to such as sleek the soothing rhyme;
And yet, forsooth, they wear Mæcenas' name:
Poor sons of puffed-up vanity, not fame.
Unbroken spirits, cheer! still, still remains
The eternal patron, Liberty; whose flame,
While she protects, inspires the noblest strains:
The best and sweetest far, are toil-created gains.

¹ Constantinople.

XXIV.

When as the knight had framed, in Britain-land,
A matchless form of glorious government,
In which the sovereign laws alone command,
Laws stablish'd by the public free consent,
Whose majesty is to the sceptre lent ;
When this great plan, with each dependent art,
Was settled firm, and to his heart's content,
Then sought he from the toilsome scene to part,
And let life's vacant eve breathe quiet through the
heart.

XXV.

For this he chose a farm in Deva's vale,
Where his long alleys peep'd upon the main :
In this calm seat he drew the healthful gale,
Here mix'd the chief, the patriot, and the swain.
The happy monarch of his sylvan train,
Here, sided by the guardians of the fold,
He walk'd his rounds, and cheer'd his blest do-
main :
His days, the days of unstain'd nature, roll'd
Replete with peace and joy, like patriarchs of old.

XXVI.

Witness, ye lowing herds, who gave him milk ;
Witness, ye flocks, whose woolly vestments far
Exceed soft India's cotton, or her silk ;
Witness, with autumn charged, the nodding car,
That homeward came beneath sweet evening's
Or of September moons the radiance mild. [star,
O hide thy head, abominable War !
Of crimes and ruffian-idleness the child !
From Heaven this life ysprung, from hell thy glo-
ries vild !

XXVII.

Nor from this deep retirement banish'd was
The amusing care of rural industry.
Still, as with grateful change the seasons pass,
New scenes arise, new landships strike the eye,
And all the enliven'd country beautify :
Gay plains extend where marshes slept before ;
O'er recent meads the exulting streamlets fly ;
Dark frowning heaths grow bright with Ceres'
store,
And woods imbrown the steep, or wave along the
shore.

XXVIII.

As nearer to his farm you made approach,
He polish'd Nature with a finer hand .
Yet on her beauties durst not Art incroach ;
'Tis Art's alone these beauties to expand.
In graceful dance immingled, o'er the land,
Pan, Pales, Flora, and Pomona play'd :
Here, too, brisk gales the rude wild common fann'd,
An happy place ; where free, and unafraid,
Amid the flowering brakes each coyer creature
stray'd.

XXIX.

But in prime vigour what can last for aye ?
That soul-enfeebling wizzard Indolence,
I whilom sung, wrought in his works decay :
Spread far and wide was his cursed influence ;
Of public virtue much he dull'd the sense,
Ev'n much of private ; ate our spirit out,
And fed our rank luxurious vices : whence
The land was overlaid with many a lout ; [stout.
Not, as old fame reports, wise, generous, bold, and

XXX.

A rage of pleasure madden'd every breast,
 Down to the lowest lees the ferment ran : ,
 To his licentious wish each must be bless'd,
 With joy be fever'd ; snatch it as he can.
 Thus Vice the standard rear'd ; her arrier-ban
 Corruption call'd, and loud she gave the word,
 ' Mind, mind yourselves ! why should the vulgar
 man,
 The lacquey, be more virtuous than his lord ?
 Enjoy this span of life ! 'tis all the gods afford.'

XXXI.

The tidings reach'd to where, in quiet hall,
 The good old knight enjoy'd well-earn'd repose :
 ' Come, come, Sir Knight ! thy children on thee
 call ;
 Come, save us yet, ere ruin round us close !
 The demon Indolence thy toils o'erethrows.'
 On this the noble colour stain'd his cheeks,
 Indignant, glowing through the whitening snows
 Of venerable eld ; his eye full-speaks [breaks.
 His ardent soul, and from his couch at once he

XXXII.

' I will, (he cried) so help me God ! destroy
 That villain Archimage.'—His page then straight
 He to him call'd ; a fiery-footed boy,
 Benempt Dispatch :—' My steed be at the gate ;
 My bard attend ; quick, bring the net of Fate.'—
 This net was twisted by the sisters three ;
 Which, when once cast o'er harden'd wretch, too
 Repentance comes : replevy cannot be [late
 From the strong iron grasp of vengeful destiny.

XXXIII.

He came, the bard, a little druid-wight,
Of wither'd aspect ; but his eye was keen,
With sweetness mix'd. In russet brown bedight,
As is his sister ² of the copses green,
He crept along, unpromising of mien.
Gross he who judges so. His soul was fair,
Bright as the children of yon azure sheen !
True comeliness, which nothing can impair,
Dwells in the mind : all else is vanity and glare.

XXXIV.

' Come (quoth the knight) a voice has reach'd mine
The demon Indolence threatens overthrow [ear :
To all that to mankind is good and dear :
Come, Philomelus ; let us instant go,
O'erturn his bowers, and lay his castle low.
Those men, those wretched men ! who will be
slaves,
Must drink a bitter wrathful cup of woe :
But some there be, thy song, as from their graves,
Shall raise. Thrice happy he ! who without rigour
saves.'

XXXV.

Issuing forth, the knight bestrode his steed,
Of ardent bay, and on whose front a star
Shone blazing bright : sprung from the generous
That whirl of active day the rapid car, [breed
He pranced along, disdaining gate or bar.
Meantime, the bard on milk-white palfrey rode ;
An honest sober beast, that did not mar
His meditations, but full softly trode :
And much they moralized as thus yfere they yode.

² The nightingale.

XXXVI.

They talk'd of virtue, and of human bliss :
 What else so fit for man to settle well ?
 And still their long researches met in this,
 This truth of truths, which nothing can refel :
 ' From Virtue's fount the purest joys out-well,
 Sweet rills of thought that cheer the conscious
 soul ;
 While Vice pours forth the troubled streams of hell,
 The which, howe'er disguised, at last with dole
 Will, through the tortured breast, their fiery tor-
 rent roll.'

XXXVII.

At length it dawn'd, that fatal valley gay, [rear.
 O'er which high wood-crown'd hills their summits
 On the cool height awhile our palmers stay,
 And spite ev'n of themselves their senses cheer ;
 Then to the wizard's wonue their steps they steer.
 Like a green isle, it broad beneath them spread,
 With gardens round, and wandering currents
 clear,
 And tufted groves to shade the meadow-bed,
 Sweet airs and song ; and without hurry all seem'd
 glad.

XXXVIII.

'As God shall judge me, knight, we must forgive
 (The half-enraptured Philomelus cried)
 The frail good man deluded here to live,
 And in these groves his musing fancy hide.
 Ah ! nought is pure. It cannot be denied,
 That virtue still some tincture has of vice,
 And vice of virtue. What should then betide,
 But that our charity be not too nice ?
 Come, let us those we can to real bliss entice.'

XXXIX.

' Ay, sicker, (quoth the knight) all flesh is frail,
To pleasant sin and joyous dalliance bent;
But let not brutish vice of this avail,
And think to escape deserved punishment.
Justice were cruel, weakly to relent;
From Mercy's self she got her sacred glaive:
Grace be to those who can, and will, repent;
But penance long, and dreary, to the slave,
Who must in floods of fire his gross foul spirit
lave.'

XL.

Thus, holding high discourse, they came to where
The cursed carle was at his wonted trade;
Still tempting heedless men into his snare,
In witching wise, as I before have said.
But when he saw, in goodly geer array'd,
The grave majestic knight approaching nigh,
And by his side the bard so sage and staid,
His countenance fell; yet oft his anxious eye
Mark'd them, like wily fox who roosted cock doth
spy.

XLI.

Nathless, with feign'd respect, he bade give back
The rabble-rout, and welcomed them full kind;
Struck with the noble twain, they were not slack
His orders to obey, and fall behind.
Then he resumed his song; and unconfined,
Pour'd all his music, ran through all his strings;
With magic dust their eyne he tries to blind,
And virtue's tender airs o'er weakness flings.
What pity base his song, who so divinely sings!

XLII.

Elate in thought, he counted them his own,
 They listen'd so intent with fix'd delight :
 But they instead, as if transmew'd to stone,
 Marvell'd he could with such sweet art unite
 The lights and shades of manners, wrong and right.
 Meantime, the silly crowd the charm devour,
 Wide pressing to the gate. Swift, on the knight
 He darted fierce, to drag him to his bower,
 Who backening shunn'd his touch, for well he knew
 its power.

XLIII.

As in throng'd amphitheatre, of old,
 The wary Retiarius³ trapp'd his foe ;
 Ev'n so the knight, returning on him bold,
 At once involved him in the Net of Woe,
 Whereof I mention made not long ago.
 Iuraged at first, he scorn'd so weak a jail,
 And leap'd, and flew, and flounced to and fro ;
 But when he found that nothing could avail,
 He sat him felly down, and gnaw'd his bitter nail.

XLIV.

Alarm'd, the inferior demons of the place
 Raised rueful shrieks and hideous yells around ;
 Black stormy clouds deform'd the welkin's face,
 And from beneath was heard a wailing sound,
 As of infernal sprites in cavern bound ;
 A solemn sadness every creature strook, [ground :
 And lightnings flash'd, and horror rock'd the
 Huge crowds on crowds out-pour'd, with ble-
 mish'd look, [shook.
 As if on Time's last verge this frame of things had

3 A gladiator, who made use of a net, which he threw over his adversary.

XLV.

Soon as the short-lived tempest was yspent,
Steam'd from the jaws of vex'd Avernus' hole,
And hush'd the hubbub of the rabblement,
Sir Industry the first calm moment stole :
' There must (he cried) amid so vast a shoal,
Be some who are not tainted at the heart,
Not poison'd quite by this same villain's bowl :
Come then, my bard, thy heavenly fire impart ;
Touch soul with soul, till forth the latent spirit
start.'

XLVI.

The hard obey'd ; and taking from his side,
Where it in seemly sort depending hung,
His British harp, its speaking strings he tried,
The which with skilful touch he deftly strung,
Till tinkling in clear symphony they rung.
Then, as he felt the Muses come along,
Light o'er the chords his raptured hand he flung,
And play'd a prelude to his rising song :
The whilst, like midnight mute, ten thousands
round him throng.

XLVII.

Thus, ardent, burst his strain.—

' Ye hapless race,
Dire-labouring here to smother Reason's ray,
That lights our Maker's image in our face,
And gives us wide o'er earth unquestion'd sway ;
What is the adored Supreme Perfection, say ?—
What, but eternal never-resting soul,
Almighty power, and all-directing day ;
By whom each atom stirs, the planets roll ;
Who fills, surrounds, informs, and agitates the whole ?

XLVIII.

‘ Come, to the beaming God your hearts unfold !
 Draw from its fountain life ! ’Tis thence, alone,
 We can excel. Up from unfeeling mould,
 To seraphs burning round the Almighty’s
 throne,
 Life rising still on life, in higher tone,
 Perfection forms, and with perfection bliss.
 In universal nature this clear shown,
 Not needeth proof : to prove it were, I wis,
 To prove the beauteous world excels the brute
 abyss.

XLIX.

‘ Is not the field, with lively culture green,
 A sight more joyous than the dead morass ?
 Do not the skies, with active ether clean,
 And fann’d by sprightly zephyrs, far surpass
 The foul November fogs, and slumberous mass
 With which sad Nature vells her drooping face ?
 Does not the mountain-stream, as clear as glass,
 Gay-dancing on, the putrid pool disgrace ?—
 The same in all holds true, but chief in human
 race.

L.

‘ It was not by vile loitering in ease,
 That Greece obtain’d the brighter palm of art ;
 That soft yet ardent Athens learn’d to please,
 To keen the wit, and to sublime the heart,
 In all supreme ! complete in every part !
 It was not thence majestic Rome arose,
 And o’er the nations shook her conquering dart :
 For sluggard’s brow the laurel never grows ;
 Renown is not the child of indolent Repose.

LI.

' Had unambitious mortals minded nought
But in loose joy their time to wear away ;
Had they alone the lap of dalliance sought,
Pleased on her pillow their dull heads to lay,
Rude Nature's state had been our state to-day ;
No cities e'er their towery fronts had raised,
No arts had made us opulent and gay ;
With brother-brutes the human race had grazed ;
None e'er had soar'd to fame, none honour'd been,
none praised.

LII.

' Great Homer's song had never fired the breast
To thirst of glory, and heroic deeds ;
Sweet Maro's Muse, sunk in inglorious rest,
Had silent slept amid the Mincian reeds :
The wits of modern time had told their beads,
And monkish legends been their only strains ;
Our Milton's Eden had lain wrapt in weeds,
Our Shakspeare stroll'd and laugh'd with War-
wick swains,
Ne had my master Spenser charm'd his Mulla's
plains.

LIII.

' Dumb too had been the sage historic Muse,
And perish'd all the sons of ancient fame ;
Those starry lights of virtue, that diffuse
Through the dark depth of time their vivid flame,
Had all been lost with such as have no name.
Who then had scorn'd his ease for others' good ?
Who then had toil'd rapacious men to tame ?
Who in the public breach devoted stood,
And for his country's cause been prodigal of blood ?

LIV.

‘ But should to fame your hearts unfeeling be,
If right I read, you pleasure all require :
Then hear how best may be obtain'd this fee,
How best enjoy'd this nature's wide desire.
Toil, and be glad ! let Industry inspire
Into your quicken'd limbs her buoyant breath !
Who does not act is dead ; absorpt entire
In miry sloth, no pride, no joy he hath :
O leaden-hearted men, to be in love with death !

LV.

‘ Ah ! what avail the largest gifts of Heaven,
When drooping health and spirits go amiss ?
How tasteless then whatever can be given !
Health is the vital principle of bliss,
And exercise of health. In proof of this,
Behold the wretch, who slugs his life away,
Soon swallow'd in disease's sad abyss ;
While he whom toil has braced, or manly play,
Has light as air each limb, each thought as clear as
day.

LVI.

‘ O, who can speak the vigorous joys of health ?
Unclogg'd the body, unobscured the mind :
The morning rises gay ; with pleasing stealth,
The temperate evening falls serene and kind.
In health the wiser brutes true gladness find.
See ! how the younglings frisk along the meads,
As May comes on, and wakes the balmy wind ;
Rampant with life, their joy all joy exceeds :
Yet what but high-strung health this dancing plea-
saunce breeds ?

LVII.

' But here, instead, is foster'd every ill,
Which or distemper'd minds or bodies know.
Come then, my kindred spirits ! do not spill
Your talents here : this place is but a show,
Whose charms delude you to the den of woe.
Come, follow me, I will direct you right,
Where pleasure's roses, void of serpents, grow,
Sincere as sweet ; come, follow this good knight,
And you will bless the day that brought him to your
sight.

LVIII.

' Some he will lead to courts, and some to camps ;
To senates some, and public sage debates,
Where, by the solemn gleam of midnight-lamps,
The world is poised, and managed mighty states ;
To high discovery some, that new-creates
The face of earth ; some to the thriving mart ;
Some to the rural reign, and softer fates ;
To the sweet Muses some, who raise the heart :
All glory shall be yours, all nature, and all art.

LIX.

' There are, I see, who listen to my lay ;
Who wretched sigh for virtue, but despair :
" All may be done, (methinks I hear them say)
Ev'n death despised by generous actions fair ;
All, but for those who to these bowers repair,
Their every power dissolved in luxury,
To quit of torpid sluggishness the lair,
And from the powerful arms of sloth get free :
'Tis rising from the dead—Alas !—It cannot be !"

LX.

' Would you then learn to dissipate the band
 Of these huge threatening difficulties dire,
 That in the weak man's way like lions stand,
 His soul appall, and damp his rising fire ?
 Resolve, resolve, and to be men aspire.
 Exert that noblest privilege, alone
 Here to mankind indulged ; controul desire :
 Let godlike Reason, from her sovereign throne,
 Speak the commanding word—*I will !*—and it is
 done.

LXI.

' Heavens ! can you then thus waste, in shameful
 Your few important days of trial here ? [wise,
 Heirs of eternity ! yborn to rise
 Through endless states of being, still more near
 To bliss approaching, and perfection clear ;
 Can you renounce a fortune so sublime,
 Such glorious hopes, your backward steps to steer,
 And roll, with vilest brutes, through mud and
 slime ? [sordid crime !'
 No ! no !—Your heaven-touch'd hearts disdain the

LXII.

' Enough ! enough !' they cried—straight from the
 The better sort on wings of transport fly : [crowd,
 As when amid the lifeless summits proud
 Of Alpine cliffs, where to the gelid sky
 Snows piled on snows in wintry torpor lie,
 The rays divine of vernal Phœbus play ;
 The awaken'd heaps, in streamlets from on high,
 Roused into action, lively leap away, [gay.
 Glad-warbling through the vales, in their new being

LXIII.

Not less the life, the vivid joy serene,
That lighted up these new-created men,
Than that which wings the exulting spirit clean,
When, just deliver'd from his fleshy den,
It soaring seeks its native skies agen :
How light its essence ! how unclogg'd its powers,
Beyond the blazon of my mortal pen !
Ev'n so we glad forsook these sinful bowers,
Ev'n such enraptured life, such energy was ours.

LXIV.

But far the greater part, with rage inflamed,
Dire-mutter'd curses, and blasphemed high Jove.
' Ye sons of hate ! (they bitterly exclaim'd)
What brought you to this seat of peace and love ?
While with kind nature, here amid the grove,
We pass'd the harmless sabbath of our time,
What to disturb it could, fell men, emove
Your barbarous hearts ? Is happiness a crime ?
Then do the fiends of hell rule in yon heaven sub-
lime.'

LXV.

' Ye impious wretches, (quoth the knight in
wrath)
Your happiness behold !'—Then straight a wand
He waved, an anti-magic power that hath,
Truth from illusive falsehood to command.
Sudden the landskip sinks on every hand ;
The pure quick streams are marshy puddles found ;
On baleful heaths the groves all blacken'd stand ;
And, o'er the weedy foul abhorred ground,
Snakes, adders, toads, each loathsome creature
crawls around.

LXVI.

And here and there, on trees by lightning scathed,
Unhappy wights who loathed life yhung ;
Or, in fresh gore and recent murder bathed,
They weltering lay ; or else, infuriate flung
Into the gloomy flood, while ravens sung
The funeral dirge, they down the torrent roll'd :
These, by distemper'd blood to madness stung,
Had doom'd themselves ; whence oft, when night
controll'd

The world, returning hither their sad spirits howl'd.

LXVII.

Meantime a moving scene was open laid ;
That lazar-house, I whilom in my lay
Depainted have, its horrors deep display'd,
And gave unnumber'd wretches to the day,
Who tossing there in squalid misery lay.
Soon as of sacred light the unwonted smile
Pour'd on these living catacombs its ray, [mile,
Through the drear caverns stretching many a
The sick up-raised their heads, and dropp'd their
woes awhile.

LXVIII.

‘ O Heaven ! (they cried) and do we once more
see
Yon blessed sun, and this green earth so fair ?
Are we from noisome damps of pest-house free ?
And drink our souls the sweet ethereal air ?
O thou ! or knight, or god ! who holdest there
That fiend, O, keep him in eternal chains !
But what for us, the children of despair,
Brought to the brink of hell, what hope remains ?
Repentance does itself but aggravate our pains ’

LXIX.


The gentle knight, who saw their rueful case,
Let fall adown his silver beard some tears.
' Certes (quoth he) it is not ev'n in grace,
To undo the past, and eke your broken years :
Nathless, to nobler worlds Repentance rears,
With humble hope, her eye ; to her is given
A power the truly contrite heart that cheers ;
She quells the brand by which the rocks are riven ;
She more than merely softens, she rejoices heaven.

LXX.

' Then patient bear the sufferings you have earn'd,
And by these sufferings purify the mind :
Let wisdom be by past misconduct learn'd :
Or pious die, with penitence resign'd,
And to a life more happy and refined,
Doubt not you shall new creatures yet arise.
Till then, you may expect in me to find
One who will wipe your sorrow from your eyes,
One who will soothe your pangs, and wing you to
the skies.'

LXXI.

They silent heard, and pour'd their thanks in
tears :
' For you, (resumed the knight, with sterner tone)
Whose hard dry hearts the obdurate demon sears,
That villain's gifts will cost you many a groan ;
In dolorous mansion long you must bemoan
His fatal charms, and weep your stains away ;
Till, soft and pure as infant goodness grown,
You feel a perfect change : then, who can say,
What grace may yet shine forth in heaven's eternal
day ?'



LXXII.

This said, his powerful wand he waved anew :
Instant, a glorious angel-train descends,
The Charities, to wit, of rosy hue ;
Sweet love their looks a gentle radiance lends,
And with seraphic flame compassion blends.
At once, delighted, to their charge they fly :
When, lo ! a goodly hospital ascends ;
In which they bade each lenient aid be nigh,
That could the sick-bed smoothe of that sad company.

LXXIII.

It was a worthy edifying sight,
And gives to human-kind peculiar grace,
To see kind hands attending day and night,
With tender ministry, from place to place.
Some prop the head ; some, from the pallid face
Wipe off the faint cold dews weak nature sheds ;
Some reach the healing draught : the whilst, to chase
The fear supreme, around their soften'd beds,
Some holy man by prayer all-opening heaven disperses.

LXXIV.

Attended by a glad acclaiming train,
Of those he rescued had from gaping hell,
Then turn'd the knight ; and, to his hall again
Soft-pacing, sought of Peace the mossy cell .
Yet down his cheeks the gems of pity fell,
To see the helpless wretches that remain'd,
There left through delves and deserts dire to yell ;
Amazed, their looks with pale dismay were stain'd,
And spreading wide their hands they meek repentance feign'd.

LXXV.

But ah ! their scorned day of grace was past:
For (horrible to tell!) a desert wild
Before them stretch'd, bare, comfortless, and
 vast ;
With gibbets, bones, and carcasses defiled.
There nor trim field nor lively culture smiled,
Nor waving shade was seen, nor fountain fair ;
But sands abrupt on sands lay loosely piled,
Through which they floundering toil'd with painful care,
Whilst Phœbus smote them sore, and fired the
 cloudless air.

LXXVI.

Then, varying to a joyless land of bogs,
The sadden'd country a grey waste appear'd ;
Where nought but putrid streams and noisome
For ever hung on drizzly Auster's beard: [fogs
Or else the ground, by piercing Caurus sear'd,
Was jagg'd with frost, or heap'd with glazed snow ;
Through these extremes a ceaseless round they
By cruel fiends still hurried to and fro, [steer'd,
Gaunt Beggary, and Scorn, with many hell-hounds
 moe.

LXXVII.

The first was with base dunghill rags yclad,
Tainting the gale, in which they flutter'd light ;
Of morbid hue his features, sunk and sad ;
His hollow eyne shook forth a sickly light ;
And o'er his lank jaw-bone, in piteous plight,
His black rough beard was matted rank and vile ;
Direful to see ! a heart-appalling sight !
Meantime foul scurf and blotches him defile ;
And dogs, where'er he went, still barked all the
 while.

LXXVIII.

The other was a fell despightful fiend :
Hell holds none worse in baleful bower below :
By pride, and wit, and rage, and rancour keen'd ;
Of man alike, if good or bad, the foe :
With nose up-turn'd, he always made a show
As if he smelt some nauseous scent ; his eye
Was cold, and keen, like blast from boreal snow ;
And taunts he casten forth most bitterly.
Such were the twain that off drove this ungodly fry.

LXXIX.

Ev'n so through Brentford town, a town of mud,
An herd of bristly swine is prick'd along :
The filthy beasts, that never chew the cud,
Still grunt, and squeak, and sing their troublous
 song,
And oft they plunge themselves the mire among :
But aye the ruthless driver goads them on,
And aye of barking dogs the bitter throng
Makes them renew their unmelodious moan ;
Ne ever find they rest from their unresting fone.

YOUNG.

THE LAST DAY.

Venit summa dies. ———

VIRG.

BOOK I.

*Ipsæ pater, mediâ nimborum in nocte, coruscâ
Fulmina molitur dextrâ: quo maxima motu
Terra tremit, fugère feræ, et mortalia corda
Per gentes humilis stravit pavor. ———*

VIRG.

WHILE others sing the fortune of the great,
Empire and arms, and all the pomp of state,
With Britain's hero¹ set their souls on fire,
And grow immortal as his deeds inspire;
I draw a deeper scene; a scene that yields
A louder trumpet, and more dreadful fields:
The world alarm'd, both earth and heaven o'er-
thrown,

And gasping Nature's last tremendous groan;
Death's ancient sceptre broke, the teeming tomb,
The righteous Judge, and man's eternal doom!

'Twixt joy and pain I view the bold design,
And ask my anxious heart if it be mine?
Whatever great or dreadful has been done
Within the sight of conscious stars or sun,

¹ The Duke of Marlborough.

Is far beneath my daring ; I look down
On all the splendours of the British crown.
This globe is for my verse a narrow bound :
Attend me, all ye glorious worlds around !
O all ye angels, howsoe'er disjoin'd,
Of every various order, place, and kind,
Hear, and assist a feeble mortal's lays :
'Tis your eternal King I strive to praise.

But chiefly thou, great Ruler ! Lord of all !
Before whose throne archangels prostrate fall ;
If at thy nod, from discord and from night,
Sprang beauty, and yon sparkling worlds of light—
Exalt ev'n me ; all inward tumults quell ;
The clouds and darkness of my mind dispel ;
To my great subject thou my breast inspire,
And raise my labouring soul with equal fire.

Man ! bear thy brow aloft, view every grace
In God's great offspring, beauteous Nature's face.
See Spring's gay bloom, see golden Autumn's store,
See how Earth smiles, and hear old Ocean roar.
Leviathans but heave their cumbrous mail,
It makes a tide, and wind-bound navies sail.
Here forests rise, the mountain's awful pride ;
Here rivers measure climes, and worlds divide :
There valleys, fraught with gold's resplendent seeds,
Hold kings' and kingdoms' fortunes in their beds :
There to the skies aspiring hills ascend,
And into distant lands their shades extend.
View cities, armies, fleets ; of fleets the pride,
See Europe's law in Albion's channel ride ;
View the whole earth's vast landscape uncounted,
Or view in Britain all her glories join'd.

Then let the firmament thy wonder raise,
'Twill raise thy wonder, but transcend thy praise.

How far from east to west ? the labouring eye
Can scarce the distant azure bounds descry :
Wide theatre ! where tempests play at large,
And God's right hand can all its wrath discharge.
Mark how those radiant lamps inflame the pole,
Call forth the seasons, and the year control.
They shine through time with an unalter'd ray,
See this grand period rise, and that decay :
So vast, this world 's a grain ; yet myriads grace,
With golden pomp, the throng'd ethereal space ;
So bright, with such a wealth of glory stored
Twere sin in heathens not to have adored.

How great, how firm, how sacred all appears !
How worthy an immortal round of years !
Yet all must drop, as autumn's sickliest grain,
And earth and firmament be sought in vain ;
The tract forgot where constellations shone,
Or where the Stuarts fill'd an awful throne :
Time shall be slain, all nature be destroy'd,
Nor leave an atom in the mighty void.

Sooner or later, in some future date,
(A dreadful secret in the book of fate !)
This hour, for aught all human wisdom knows,
Or when ten thousand harvests more have rose ;
When scenes are changed on this revolving earth,
Old empires fall, and give new empires birth ;
While other Bourbons rule in other lands,
And (if man's sin forbids not) other Annes ;
While the still busy world is treading o'er
The paths they trod five thousand years before,
Thoughtless as those who now life's mazes run,
Of earth dissolved, or an extinguish'd sun ;
(Ye sublunary worlds, awake, awake !
Ye rulers of the nations, hear and shake !)

Thick clouds of darkness shall arise on day,
In sudden night all earth's dominions lay,
Impetuous winds the scatter'd forests rend,
Eternal mountains, like their cedars, bend ;
The valleys yawn, the troubled ocean roar,
And break the bondage of his wonted shore ;
A sanguine stain the silver moon o'erspread,
Darkness the circle of the sun invade ;
From inmost heaven incessant thunders roll,
And the strong echo bound from pole to pole.

When, lo ! a mighty trump, one half conceal'd
In clouds, one half to mortal eye reveal'd,
Shall pour a dreadful note ; the piercing call
Shall rattle in the centre of the ball ;
The extended circuit of creation shake,
The living die with fear, the dead awake.

O, powerful blast ! to which no equal sound
Did e'er the frightened ear of Nature wound,
Though rival clarions have been strain'd on high,
And kindled wars immortal through the sky ;
Though God's whole enginery discharged, and all
The rebel angels bellow'd in their fall.

Have angels sinn'd ? and shall not man beware ?
How shall a son of earth decline the snare ?
Not folded arms, and slackness of the mind,
Can promise for the safety of mankind.
None are supinely good ; through care and pain,
And various arts, the steep ascent we gain.
This is the scene of combat, not of rest ;
Man's is laborious happiness at best :
On this side death his dangers never cease ;
His joys are joys of conquest, not of peace.

If then, obsequious to the will of Fate,
And bending to the terms of human state,

When guilty joys invite us to their arms, [charms,
When Beauty smiles, or Grandeur spreads her
The conscious soul would this great scene display ;
Call down the immortal hosts in dread array,
The trumpet sound, the Christian banner spread,
And raise from silent graves the trembling dead ;
Such deep impression would the picture make,
No power on earth her firm resolve could shake ;
Engaged with angels she would greatly stand,
And look regardless down on sea and land :
Not proffer'd worlds her ardour could restrain,
And Death might shake his threatening lance in vain :
Her certain conquest would endear the fight,
And danger serve but to exalt delight.

Instructed thus to shun the fatal spring
Whence flow the terrors of that day I sing,
More boldly we our labours may pursue,
And all the dreadful image set to view.

The sparkling eye, the sleek and painted breast,
The burnish'd scale, curl'd train, and rising crest,
All that is lovely in the noxious snake,
Provokes our fear, and bids us flee the brake :
The sting once drawn, his guiltless beauties rise
In pleasing lustre, and detain our eyes ;
We view with joy what once did horror move,
And strong aversion softens into love.

Say then, my Muse ! whom dismal scenes delight,
Frequent at tombs, and in the realms of night ;
Say, melancholy maid ! if bold to dare
The last extremes of terror and despair,
O, say what change on earth, what heart in man,
This blackest moment since the world began.

Ah, mournful turn ! the blissful earth, who late
At leisure on her axle roll'd in state,

While thousand golden planets knew no rest,
Still onward in their circling journey press'd ;
A grateful change of seasons some to bring,
And sweet vicissitude of fall and spring ;
Some through vast oceans to conduct the keel,
And some those watery worlds to sink or swell :
Around her some their splendours to display,
And gild her globe with tributary day :
This world so great, of joy the bright abode,
Heaven's darling child, and favourite of her God,
Now looks an exile from her Father's care,
Deliver'd o'er to darkness and despair.
No sun in radiant glory shines on high,
No light, but from the terrors of the sky ;
Fallen are her mountains, her famed rivers lost,
And all into a second chaos toss'd :
One universal ruin spreads abroad ;
Nothing is safe beneath the throne of God.

Such, Earth ! thy fate : what then canst thou afford
To comfort and support thy guilty lord ?
Man, haughty lord of all beneath the moon,
How must he bend his soul's ambition down ?
Prostrate, the reptile own, and disavow
His boasted stature, and assuming brow ?
Claim kindred with the clay, and curse his form,
That speaks distinction from his sister worm ?
What dreadful pangs the trembling heart invade !
Lord ! why dost thou forsake whom thou hast made ?
Who can sustain thy anger ? who can stand
Beneath the terrors of thy lifted hand ?
It flies the reach of thought: O, save me, Power
Of powers supreme, in that tremendous hour !
Thou who beneath the frown of Fate hast stood,
And in thy dreadful agony sweat blood ;

Thou who for me, through every throbbing vein,
Hast felt the keenest edge of mortal pain ;
Whom Death led captive through the realms below,
And taught those horrid mysteries of woe ;
Defend me, O my God ! O, save me, Power
Of powers supreme, in that tremendous hour !

From east to west they fly, from pole to line,
Imploring shelter from the wrath divine ;
Beg flames to wrap, or whelming seas to sweep,
Or rocks to yawn, compassionately deep ;
Seas cast the monster forth to meet his doom,
And rocks but prison up for wrath to come.
So fares a traitor to an earthly crown,
While Death sits threatening in his prince's frown,
His heart's dismay'd ; and now his fears command
To change his native for a distant land :
Swift orders fly ; the king's severe decree
Stands in the channel, and locks up the sea ;
The port he seeks, obedient to her lord,
Hurls back the rebel to his lifted sword.

But why this idle toil to paint that day ?
This time elaborately thrown away ? —
Words all in vain pant after the distress,
The height of eloquence would make it less.
Heavens ! how the good man trembles !—

And is there a Last Day ? and must there come
A sure, a fix'd, inexorable doom ?
Ambition ! swell ; and, thy proud sails to show,
Take all the winds that Vanity can blow ;
Wealth ! on a golden mountain blazing stand,
And reach an India forth in either hand ;
Spread all thy purple clusters, tempting Vine !
And thou, more dreaded foe, bright Beauty ! shine :
Shine all, in all your charms together rise,
That all, in all your charms, I may despise,

While I mount upward on a strong desire,
Borne, like Elijah, on a car of fire.

In hopes of glory to be quite involved !
To smile at death ! to long to be dissolved !
From our decays a pleasure to receive !
And kindle into transport at a grave !
What equals this ? And shall the victor now
Boast the proud laurels on his loaded brow ?
Religion ! O, thou cherub, heavenly bright !
O joys unmix'd, and fathomless delight !
Thou, thou art all ; nor find I in the whole
Creation aught but God and my own soul.

For ever, then, my soul ! thy God adore,
Nor let the brute creation praise him more.
Shall things inanimate my conduct blame,
And flush my conscious cheek with spreading
shame ?

They all for him pursue, or quit their end :
The mountain flames their burning power suspend ;
In solid heaps the unfrozen billows stand,
To rest and silence awed by his command :
Nay, the dire monsters that infest the flood,
By nature dreadful, and athirst for blood,
His will can calm, their savage tempers bind,
And turn to mild protectors of mankind.
Did not the prophet this great truth maintain
In the deep chambers of the gloomy main,
When Darkness round him all her horrors spread,
And the loud ocean bellow'd o'er his head ?

When now the thunder roars, the lightning flies,
And all the warring winds tumultuous rise ;
When now the foaming surges, toss'd on high,
Disclose the sands beneath, and touch the sky ;
When death draws near, the mariners aghast
Look back with terror on their actions past ;

Their courage sickens into deep dismay ;
Their hearts, through fear and anguish, melt away ;
Nor tears, nor prayers, the tempest can appease :
Now they devote their treasure to the seas ;
Unload their shatter'd bark, though richly fraught,
And think the hopes of life are cheaply bought
With gems and gold ; but, O, the storm so high !
Nor gems nor gold the hopes of life can buy.

The trembling prophet then, themselves to save,
They headlong plunge into the briny wave ;
Down he descends, and, booming o'er his head,
The billows close ; he's number'd with the dead.
(Hear, O ye just ! attend, ye virtuous few !
And the bright paths of piety pursue)
Lo ! the great Ruler of the world, from high,
Looks smiling down with a propitious eye,
Covers his servant with his gracious hand,
And bids tempestuous Nature silent stand ;
Commands the peaceful waters to give place,
Or kindly fold him in a soft embrace ;
He bridles in the monsters of the deep ;
The bridled monsters awful distance keep ;
Forget their hunger while they view their prey,
And guiltless gaze, and round the stranger play.

But still arise new wonders : Nature's Lord
Sends forth into the deep his powerful word,
And calls the great leviathan : the great
Leviathan attends in all his state,
Exults for joy, and, with a mighty bound,
Makes the sea shake, and heaven and earth resound,
Blackens the waters with the rising sand,
And drives vast billows to the distant land.
As yawns an earthquake, when imprison'd air
Struggles for vent, and lays the centre bare,

The whale expands his jaw's enormous size :
The prophet views the cavern with surprise,
Measures his monstrous teeth, afar descried,
And rolls his wondering eyes from side to side ;
Then takes possession of the spacious seat,
And sails secure within the dark retreat.

Now is he pleased the northern blast to hear,
And hangs on liquid mountains void of fear,
Or falls, immersed, into the depths below,
Where the dead silent waters never flow ;
To the foundations of the hills convey'd,
Dwells in the shelving mountain's dreadful shade ;
Where plummet never reach'd he draws his breath,
And glides serenely through the paths of death.
Two wondrous days and nights through coral groves,
Through labyrinths of rocks and sands, he roves ;
When the third morning, with its level rays,
The mountains gilds, and on the billows plays,
It sees the king of waters rise, and pour
His sacred guest uninjured on the shore ;
A type of that great blessing which the Muse
In her next labour ardently pursues.

BOOK II.

——— ἐκ γαίης ἐλπίζομεν εἰς Φάος ἰλθεῖν,
 Λείψαν ἀπορχομένων ὀπίσω δὲ Θεοὶ τελέεσθαι.

PHOCYL.

i. c.

We hope that the departed will rise again from the dust ;
 after which, like the gods, they will be immortal.

Now man awakes, and from his silent bed,
 Where he has slept for ages, lifts his head,
 Shakes off the slumber of ten thousand years,
 And on the borders of new worlds appears.
 Whate'er the bold, the rash adventure cost,
 In wide eternity I dare be lost.
 The Muse is wont in narrow bounds to sing,
 To teach the swain, or celebrate the king :
 I grasp the whole ; no more to parts confined,
 I lift my voice, and sing to human kind ;—
 I sing to men and angels ; angels join,
 While such the theme, their sacred songs with mine.
 Again the trumpet's intermitted sound
 Rolls the wide circuit of creation round,
 A universal concourse to prepare
 Of all that ever breathed the vital air ;
 In some wide field, which active whirlwinds sweep,
 Drive cities, forests, mountains, to the deep,
 To smoothe and lengthen out the unbounded space,
 And spread an area for all human race.

H

Now monuments prove faithful to their trust,
And render back their long-committed dust ;
Now charnels rattle ; scatter'd limbs, and all
The various bones, obsequious to the call,
Self-moved, advance ; the neck, perhaps, to meet
The distant head ; the distant legs the feet.
Dreadful to view, see through the dusky sky
Fragments of bodies in confusion fly,
To distant regions journeying, there to claim
Deserted members, and complete the frame.

When the world bow'd to Rome's almighty sword,
Rome bow'd to Pompey, and confess'd her lord :
Yet one day lost, this deity below
Became the scorn and pity of his foe ;
His blood a traitor's sacrifice was made,
And smoked indignant on a ruffian's blade :
No trumpet's sound, no gasping army's yell,
Bid, with due horror, his great soul farewell :
Obscure his fall ! all weltering in his gore,
His trunk was cast to perish on the shore ;
While Julius frown'd the bloody monster dead,
Who brought the world in his great rival's head.
This sever'd head and trunk shall join once more,
Though realms now rise between, and oceans roar.
The trumpet's sound each vagrant mote shall hear,
Or fix'd in earth, or if afloat in air,
Obey the signal wafted in the wind,
And not one sleeping atom lie behind.
So swarming bees that, on a summer's day,
In airy rings and wild meanders play,
Charm'd with the brazen sound, their wanderings
And, gently circling, on a bough descend. [end,
The body thus renew'd, the conscious soul,
Which has perhaps been fluttering near the pole,

Or midst the burning planets wondering stray'd,
Or hover'd o'er where her pale corpse was laid,
Or rather coasted on her final state,
And fear'd, or wish'd, for her appointed fate ;
This soul, returning with a constant flame,
Now weds for ever her immortal frame :
Life, which ran down before, so high is wound,
The springs maintain an everlasting round.
Thus a frail model of the work design'd
First takes a copy of the builder's mind ;
Before the structure firm, with lasting oak,
And marble bowels of the solid rock,
Turns the strong arch, and bids the columns rise,
And bear the lofty palace to the skies ;
The wrongs of time enabled to surpass,
With bars of adamant, and ribs of brass.

That ancient, sacred, and illustrious dome¹,
Where soon or late fair Albion's heroes come
From camps and courts, though great, or wise, or
To feed the worm, and moulder into dust ; [just,
That solemn mansion of the royal dead,
Where passing slaves o'er sleeping monarchs tread,
Now populous o'erflows ; a numerous race
Of rising kings fill all the extended space :
A life well spent, not the victorious sword,
Awards the crown, and styles the greater lord:

Nor monuments alone, and burial earth,
Labours with man to this his second birth ;
But where gay palaces in pomp arise,
And gilded theatres invade the skies,
Nations shall wake, whose unrespected bones
Support the pride of their luxurious sons.

¹ Westminster Abbey.

The most magnificent and costly dome
Is but an upper chamber to a tomb.
No spot on earth but has supplied a grave,
And human skulls the spacious ocean pave :
All's full of man ; and at this dreadful turn
The swarm shall issue, and the hive shall burn.

Not all at once, nor in like manner, rise ;
Some lift with pain their slow unwilling eyes,
Shrink backward from the terror of the light,
And bless the grave, and call for lasting night ;
Others, whose long-attempted virtue stood
Fix'd as a rock, and broke the rushing flood,
Whose firm resolve nor beauty could melt down,
Nor raging tyrants from their posture frown ;
Such, in this day of horrors, shall be seen
To face the thunders with a godlike mien.
The planets drop, their thoughts are fix'd above ;
The centre shakes, their hearts disdain to move.
An earth dissolving, and a Heaven thrown wide,
A yawning gulph, and fiends on every side,
Serene they view, impatient of delay,
And bless the dawn of everlasting day.

Here Greatness prostrate falls ; there Strength
gives place ;
Here lazars smile ; there Beauty hides her face.
Christians, and Jews, and Turks, and Pagans stand,
A blended throng, one undistinguish'd band.
Some who, perhaps, by mutual wounds expired,
With zeal for their distinct persuasions fired,
In mutual friendship their long slumber break,
And hand in hand their Saviour's love partake.
But none are flush'd with brighter joy, or, warm
With juster confidence, enjoy the storm,
Than those whose pious bounties, unconfined,
Have made them public fathers of mankind.

In that illustrious rank what shining light,
 With such distinguish'd glory, fills my sight?
 Bend down, my grateful Muse ! that homage show,
 Which to such worthies thou art proud to owe.
 Wickham ! Fox ! Chichely*! hail, illustrious names !
 Who to far distant times dispense your beams :
 Beneath your shades, and near your crystal springs
 I first presumed to touch the trembling strings :
 All hail, thrice honour'd ! 'twas your great renown
 To bless a people, and oblige a crown ;
 And now you rise, eternally to shine,
 Eternally to drink the rays divine.

Indulgent God ! O, how shall mortal raise
 His soul to due returns of grateful praise,
 For bounty so profuse to human kind,
 Thy wondrous gift of an eternal Mind ?
 Shall I, who, some few years ago, was less
 Than worm, or mite, or shadow can express ;
 Was nothing ;—shall I live, when every fire
 Of every star shall languish and expire ?
 When earth's no more, shall I survive above,
 And through the radiant files of angels move ?
 Or, as before the throne of God I stand,
 See new worlds rolling from his spacious hand,
 Where our adventures shall perhaps be taught,
 As we now tell how Michael sung or fought ?
 All that has being in full concert join,
 And celebrate the depths of love divine ?

But, O ! before this blissful state, before
 The aspiring soul this wondrous height can soar,
 The Judge, descending, thunders from afar,
 And all mankind is summon'd to the bar.

* Founders of New-College, Corpus Christi, and All-Souls,
 in Oxford ; of all which the author was a member.

This mighty scene I next presume to draw.
 Attend, great Anna ! with religious awe :
 Expect not here the known successful arts
 To win attention, and command our hearts.
 Fiction, be far away ! let no machine,
 Descending here, no fabled god, be seen ;
 Behold the God of gods indeed descend,
 And worlds unnumber'd his approach attend !

Lo ! the wide theatre, whose ample space
 Must entertain the whole of human race,
 At Heaven's all-powerful edict is prepared,
 And fenced around with an immortal guard.
 Tribes, provinces, dominions, worlds o'erflow
 The mighty plain, and deluge all below,
 And every age and nation pours along :
 Nimrod and Bourbon mingle in the throng ;
 Adam salutes his youngest son : no sign
 Of all those ages which their births disjoin.

How empty learning, and how vain is art,
 But as it mends the life and guides the heart !
 What volumes have been swell'd, what time been
 To fix a hero's birth-day or descent ! [spent,
 What joy must it now yield, what rapture raise,
 To see the glorious race of ancient days !
 To greet those worthies who perhaps have stood
 Illustrious on record before the flood !
 Alas ! a nearer care your soul demands ;
 Cæsar unnoted in your presence stands.

How vast the concourse ! not in number more
 The waves that break on the resounding shore,
 The leaves that tremble in the shady grove,
 The lamps that gild the spangled vaults above :
 Those overwhelming armies, whose command
 Said to one empire *fall*, another *stand* ;

Whose rear lay wrapp'd in night, while breaking dawn
Roused the broad front, and call'd the battle on ;
Great Xerxes' world in arms, proud Cannæ's field,
Where Carthage taught victorious Rome to yield,
(Another blow had broke the Fates' decree,
And earth had wanted her fourth monarchy)
Immortal Blenheim, famed Ramillia's host ;
They all are here, and here they all are lost :
Their millions swell to be discern'd in vain,
Lost as a billow in the unbounded main.

This echoing voice now rends the yielding air :
' For judgment, judgment, sons of men, prepare !'
Earth shakes anew, I hear her groans profound,
And Hell through all her trembling realms resound.

Whoe'er thou art, thou greatest power of earth,
Bless'd with most equal planets at thy birth,
Whose valour drew the most successful sword,
Most realms united in one common lord,
Who on the day of triumph, saidst, ' Be thine
The skies, Jehovah ! all this world is mine ;'
Dare not to lift thine eye.—Alas, my Muse !
How art thou lost ? what numbers canst thou choose ?

A sudden blush inflames the waving sky,
And now the crimson curtains open fly.
Lo ! far within, and far above all height, [light,
Where Heaven's great Sovereign reigns in worlds of
Whence Nature he informs, and with one ray,
Shot from his eye, does all her works survey,
Creates, supports, confounds ; where time and place,
Matter, and form, and fortune, life, and grace,
Wait humbly at the footstool of their God,
And move obedient at his awful nod ;
Whence he beholds us vagrant emmets crawl
At random on this air-suspended ball

(Speck of creation) ; if he pour one breath,
The bubble breaks, and 'tis eternal death.

Thence issuing I behold, (but mortal sight
Sustains not such a rushing sea of light)
I see, on an empyreal flying throne
Sublimely raised, Heaven's everlasting Son,
Crown'd with that majesty which form'd the world,
And the grand rebel flaming downward hurl'd ;
Virtue, Dominion, Praise, Omnipotence,
Support the train of their triumphant Prince ;
A zone, beyond the thought of angels bright,
Around him, like the zodiac, winds its light :
Night shades the solemn arches of his brows,
And in his cheek the purple morning glows.
Where'er, serene, he turns propitious eyes,
Or we expect, or find, a paradise ;
But if resentment reddens their mild beams,
The Eden kindles, and the world 's in flames.
On one hand Knowledge shines in purest light ;
On one, the sword of Justice, fiercely bright.
Now bend the knee in sport, present the reed ;
Now tell the scourged Impostor he shall bleed !

Thus glorious through the courts of Heaven, the
Of life and death eternal bends his course ; [Source
Loud thunders round him roll, and lightnings play ;
The angelic host is ranged in bright array :
Some touch the string, some strike the sounding
And mingling voices in rich concert swell ; [shell,
Voices seraphic ! bless'd with such a strain,
Could Satan hear, he were a god again.

'Triumphant King of Glory ! Soul of Bliss !
What a stupendous turn of fate is this !
O ! whither art thou raised above the scorn
And indigence of him in Bethlehem born ;

A needless, helpless, unaccounted guest,
And but a second to the fodder'd beast !
How changed from him who, meekly prostrate laid,
Vouchsafed to wash the feet himself had made !
From him who was betray'd, forsook, denied,
Wept, languish'd, pray'd, bled, thirsted, groan'd, and
Hung pierced and bare, insulted by the foe, [died ;
All Heaven in tears above, earth unconcern'd below !

And was't enough to bid the sun retire ?
Why did not Nature at thy groan expire ?
I see, I hear, I feel, the pangs divine
'The world is vanish'd,—I am wholly thine.

Mistaken Caiaphas ! ah, which blasphemed,
Thou or thy prisoner ? which shall be condemn'd ?
Well might'st thou rend thy garments, well exclaim,
Deep are the horrors of eternal flame !
But God is good ! 'tis wondrous all ! ev'n He
Thou gavest to death, shame, torture, died for thee.

Now the descending triumph stops its flight,
From earth full twice a planetary height ;
There all the clouds condensed, two columns raise,
Distinct with orient veins and golden blaze ;
One fix'd on earth, and one in sea, and round
Its ample foot the swelling billows sound :
These an immeasurable arch support,
The grand tribunal of this awful court :
Sheets of bright azure, from the purest sky,
Stream from the crystal arch and round the columns
Death, wrapp'd in chains, low at the basis lies, [fly :
And on the point of his own arrow dies.

Here high enthroned the eternal Judge is placed,
With all the grandeur of his godhead graced ;
Stars on his robes in beauteous order meet,
And the sun burns beneath his awful feet.

Now an archangel, eminently bright,
From off his silver staff, of wondrous height,
Unfurls the Christian flag, which waving flies,
And shuts and opens more than half the skies :
The Cross so strong a red, it sheds a stain,
Where'er it floats, on earth, and air, and main ;
Flushes the hill, and sets on fire the wood,
And turns the deep-died ocean into blood.

O formidable glory ! dreadful bright !
Refulgent torture to the guilty sight !
Ah, turn, unwary Muse ! nor dare reveal
What horrid thoughts with the polluted dwell.
Say not, (to make the sun shrink in his beam)
Dare not affirm, they wish it all a dream ;
Wish or their souls may with their limbs decay,
Or God be spoil'd of his eternal sway :
But rather, if thou know'st the means, unfold
How they with transport might the scene behold.

Ah, how ! but by repentance, by a mind
Quick, and severe, its own offence to find ?
By tears, and groans, and never-ceasing care,
And all the pious violence of prayer ?—
Thus then, with fervency till now unknown,
I cast my heart before the eternal throne,
In this great temple, which the skies surround,
For homage to its Lord a narrow bound. [weigh,

' O Thou ! whose balance doth the mountains
Whose will the wild tumultuous seas obey,
Whose breath can turn those watery worlds to flame,
That flame to tempest, and that tempest tame ;
Earth's meanest son, all trembling, prostrate falls,
And on the boundless of thy goodness calls.

' O ! give the winds all past offence to sweep,
To scatter wide, or bury in the deep :

Thy power, my weakness, may I ever see,
And wholly dedicate my soul to thee :
Reign o'er my will ; my passions ebb and flow
At thy command, nor human motive know !
If anger boil, let anger be my praise,
And sin the graceful indignation raise :
My love be warm to succour the distress'd,
And lift the burden from the soul oppress'd.

‘ O, may my understanding ever read
This glorious volume which thy wisdom made !
Who decks the maiden Spring with flowery pride ?
Who calls forth Summer, like a sparkling bride ?
Who joys the mother Autumn's bed to crown ?
And bids old Winter lay her honours down ?
Not the great Ottoman, or greater Czar,
Not Europe's arbitress of peace and war.
May sea, and land, and earth, and heaven be join'd,
To bring the eternal Author to my mind !
When oceans roar, or awful thunders roll,
May thoughts of thy dread vengeance shake my soul ;
When earth 's in bloom, or planets proudly shine,
Adore, my heart, the Majesty Divine !

‘ Through every scene of life, or peace or war,
Plenty or want, thy glory be my care !
Shine we in arms ? or sing beneath our vine ?
Thine is the vintage, and the conquest thine :
Thy pleasure points the shaft, and bends the bow ;
The cluster blasts, or bids it brightly glow :
’Tis thou that lead'st our powerful armies forth,
And givest great Anne thy sceptre o'er the North.

‘ Grant I may ever, at the morning ray,
Open with prayer the consecrated day ;
Tune thy great praise, and bid my soul arise,
And with the mounting sun ascend the skies :

As that advances, let my zeal improve,
And glow with ardour of consummate love;
Nor cease at eve, but with the setting sun
My endless worship shall be still begun.
And, O ! permit the gloom of solemn night
To sacred thought may forcibly invite.
When this world 's shut, and awful planets rise,
Call on our minds, and raise them to the skies ;
Compose our souls with a less dazzling sight,
And show all nature in a milder light.
How every boisterous thought in calms subsides !
How the smoothed spirit into goodness glides !
O, how divine, to tread the milky way,
To the bright palace of the Lord of Day !
His court admire, or for his favour sue,
Or leagues of friendship with his saints renew !
Pleased to look down, and see the world asleep,
While I long vigils to its Founder keep !
‘ Canst thou not shake the centre ? O, control,
Subdue by force, the rebel in my soul.
Thou who canst still the raging of the flood,
Restrain the various tumults of my blood ;
Teach me, with equal firmness, to sustain
Alluring pleasure, and assailing pain.
O, may I pant for thee in each desire,
And with strong faith foment the holy fire ;
Stretch out my soul in hope, and grasp the prize
Which in Eternity's deep bosom lies !
At the great day of recompense behold,
Devoid of fear, the fatal book unfold !
Then wafted upward to the blissful seat,
From age to age my grateful song repeat ;
My light, my life, my God, my Saviour, see,
And rival angels in the praise of thee !’

BOOK III.

*Ese quoque in fatis reminiscitur, affore tempus,
Quo mare, quo tellus, correptaque regia cœli
Ardeat, et mundi moles operosa laboret.*

OVID. *Met.*

THE book unfolding, the resplendent seat
Of saints and angels, the tremendous fate
Of guilty souls, the gloomy realms of woe,
And all the horrors of the world below,
I next presume to sing. What yet remains
Demands my last, but most exalted strains :
And let the Muse or now affect the sky,
Or in inglorious shades for ever lie.
She kindles ; she's inflamed, so near the goal ;
She mounts ; she gains upon the starry pole ;
The world grows less as she pursues her flight,
And the sun darkens to her distant sight :
Heaven opening, all its sacred pomp displays,
And overwhelms her with the rushing blaze !
The triumph rings, archangels shout around,
And echoing Nature lengthens out the sound !
Ten thousand trumpets now at once advance ;
Now deepest silence lulls the vast expanse :
So deep the silence, and so strong the blast,
As Nature died, when she had groan'd her last.
Nor man nor angel moves ; the Judge on high
Looks round, and with his glory fills the sky ;

Then on the fatal book his hand he lays,
Which high to view supporting seraphs raise ;
In solemn form the rituals are prepared,
The seal is broken, and a groan is heard.
And thou, my soul ! (O, fall to sudden prayer,
And let the thought sink deep !) shalt thou be
there ?

See on the left (for by the great command
The throng divided falls on either hand)
How weak, how pale, how haggard, how obscene,
What more than death in every face and mien !
With what distress, and glarings of affright,
They shock the heart, and turn away the sight !
In gloomy orbs their trembling eyeballs roll,
And tell the horrid secrets of the soul ;
Each gesture mourns, each look is black with care,
And every groan is laden with despair.
Reader ! if guilty, spare the Muse, and find
A truer image pictured in thy mind.

Shouldst thou behold thy brother, father, wife,
And all the soft companions of thy life,
Whose blended interests levell'd at one aim,
Whose mix'd desires sent up one common flame,
Divided far, thy wretched self alone
Cast on the left of all whom thou hast known,—
How would it wound ? what millions wouldst thou
give

For one more trial, one day more to live ?
Flung back in time an hour, a moment's space,
To grasp with eagerness the means of grace,
Contend for mercy with a pious rage,
And in that moment to redeem an age ?
Drive back the tide, suspend a storm in air,
Arrest the sun, but still of this despair.

Mark, on the right, how amiable a grace !
Their Maker's image fresh in every face !
What purple bloom my ravish'd soul admires,
And their eyes sparkling with immortal fires !
Triumphant Beauty ! charms that rise above
This world, and in bless'd angels kindle love !
To the great Judge with holy pride they turn,
And dare behold the Almighty's anger burn,
Its flash sustain, against its terror rise,
And on the dread tribunal fix their eyes.
Are these the forms that moulder'd in the dust ?
O, the transcendent glory of the just !
Yet still some thin remains of fear and doubt
The infected brightness of their joy pollute.
Thus the chaste bridegroom, when the priest draws
Beholds his blessing with a trembling eye, [nigh,
Feels doubtful passions throb in every vein,
And in his cheeks are mingled joy and pain,
Lest still some intervening chance should rise,
Leap forth at once, and snatch the golden prize,
Inflame his woe, by bringing it so late,
And stab him in the crisis of his fate.

Since Adam's family, from first to last,
Now into one distinct survey is cast,
Look round, vain-glorious Muse ! and you whoe'er
Devote yourselves to Fame, and think her fair,
Look round, and seek the lights of human race,
Whose shining acts Time's brightest annals grace ;
Who founded sects, crowns conquer'd or resign'd ;
Gave names to nations, or famed empires join'd ;
Who raised the vale, and laid the mountain low,
And taught obedient rivers where to flow ;
Who with vast fleets, as with a mighty chain,
Could bind the madness of the roaring main ;

All lost ? all undistinguish'd ? no where found ?
How will this truth in Bourbon's palace sound ?

That hour, on which the Almighty King on
high,

From all eternity has fix'd his eye,
Whether his right hand favour'd or annoy'd,
Continued, alter'd, threaten'd, or destroy'd,
Southern or eastern sceptre downward hurl'd,
Gave north or west dominion o'er the world ;
The point of time, for which the world was built,
For which the blood of God himself was spilt,
That dreadful moment is arrived.—

Aloft, the seats of bliss their pomp display ;
Brighter than brightness this distinguish'd day ;
Less glorious, when of old the Eternal Son
From realms of night return'd with trophies won ;
Through Heaven's high gates when he triumphant
rode,

And shouting angels hail'd the Victor-God.
Horrors beneath, darkness in darkness, hell
Of hell, where torments behind torments dwell ;
A furnace formidable, deep, and wide,
O'erboiling with a mad sulphureous tide,
Expands its jaws, most dreadful to survey,
And roars outrageous for the destined prey :
The sons of light scarce unappall'd look down,
And nearer press Heaven's everlasting throne.

Such is the scene, and one short moment's
space

Concludes the hopes and fears of human race.
Proceed who dares !—I tremble as I write ;
The whole creation swims before my sight :
I see, I see the Judge's frowning brow ;
Say not 'tis distant ; I behold it now

I faint ; my tardy blood forgets to flow ;
My soul recoils at the stupendous woe ;
That woe, those pangs, which from the guilty
breast

In these, or words like these, shall be express'd :—

‘ Who burst the barriers of my peaceful grave ?

Ah ! cruel Death, that would no longer save,
But grudged me ev’n that narrow dark abode,
And cast me out into the wrath of God ;
Where shrieks, the roaring flame, the rattling chain,
And all the dreadful eloquence of pain,
Our only song ; black fire’s malignant light,
The sole refreshment of the blasted sight.

‘ Must all those powers, Heaven gave me to supply

My soul with pleasure, and bring in my joy,
Rise up in arms against me, join the foe ?
Sense, reason, memory, increase my woe ?
And shall my voice, ordain’d on hymns to dwell,
Corrupt to groans, and blow the fires of hell ?
O ! must I look with terror on my gain,
And with existence only measure pain ?
What ! no reprieve, no least indulgence given,
No beam of hope from any point of Heaven ?
Ah, Mercy ! Mercy ! art thou dead above ?
Is love extinguish’d in the Source of Love ?

‘ Bold that I am, did Heaven stoop down to hell ?

The expiring Lord of Life my ransom seal ?
Have I not been industrious to provoke ?
From his embraces obstinately broke ?
Pursued and panted for his mortal hate ?
Earn’d my destruction, labour’d out my fate ?
And dare I on extinguish’d love exclaim ?
Take, take full vengeance, rouse the slackening
flame ;

Just is my lot—but, O ! must it transcend
The reach of time, despair a distant end ?
With dreadful growth shoot forward and arise
Where Thought can't follow, and bold Fancy dies ?
‘ *Never !* where falls the soul at that dread sound !
Down an abyss how dark, and how profound !
Down, down, (I still am falling, horrid pain !)
Ten thousand thousand fathoms still remain ;
My plunge but still begun—and this for sin ?
Could I offend if I had never been,
But still increased the senseless happy mass,
Flow'd in the stream, or shiver'd in the grass ?

‘ Father of Mercies ! why from silent earth
Didst thou awake, and curse me into birth ?
Tear me from quiet, ravish me from night,
And make a thankless present of thy light ?
Push into being a reverse of thee,
And animate a clod with misery ?

‘ The beasts are happy ; they come forth, and
keep
Short watch on earth, and then lie down to sleep :
Pain is for man ; and, O ! how vast a pain,
For crimes, which made the Godhead bleed in
vain !

Annull'd his groans, as far as in them lay,
And flung his agonies and death away !
As our dire punishment for ever strong,
Our constitution, too, for ever young,
Cursed with returns of vigour, still the same,
Powerful to bear, and satisfy the flame ;
Still to be caught, and still to be pursued !
To perish still, and still to be renew'd !

‘ And this, my help ! my God ! at thy decree ?
Nature is changed, and hell should succour me.

And canst thou then look down from perfect bliss,
And see me plunging in the dark abyss ?
Calling thee Father in a sea of fire,
Or pouring blasphemies at thy desire ?
With mortals' anguish wilt thou raise thy name,
And by my pangs Omnipotence proclaim ?

‘Thou who canst toss the planets to and fro,
Contract not thy great vengeance to my woe ;
Crush worlds ; in hotter flames fallen angels lay ;
On me almighty wrath is cast away.
Call back thy thunders, Lord ! hold in thy rage,
Nor with a speck of wretchedness engage :
Forget me quite, nor stoop a worm to blame,
But lose me in the greatness of thy name.
Thou art all love, all mercy, all divine,
And shall I make those glories cease to shine ?
Shall sinful man grow great by his offence,
And from its course turn back Omnipotence ?

‘Forbid it ! and, O ! grant, great God ! at least
This one, this slender, almost *no* request ;
When I have wept a thousand lives away,
When Torment is grown weary of its prey,
When I have raved ten thousand years in fire,
Ten thousand thousands, let me then expire.’

Deep anguish ! but too late ; the hopeless soul,
Bound to the bottom of the burning pool,
Though loth, and ever loud blaspheming, owns
He's justly doom'd to pour eternal groans ;
Enclosed with horrors, and transfix'd with pain,
Rolling in vengeance, struggling with his chain ;
To talk to fiery tempests, to implore
The raging flame to give its burnings o'er ;
To toss, to writhe, to pant beneath his load,
And bear the weight of an offended God.

The favour'd of their Judge in triumph move
To take possession of their thrones above,
Satan's accursed desertion to supply,
And fill the vacant stations of the sky ;
Again to kindle long-extinguish'd rays,
And with new lights dilate the heavenly blaze ;
To crop the roses of immortal youth,
And drink the fountain-head of sacred truth ;
To swim in seas of bliss, to strike the string,
And lift the voice to their Almighty King ;
To lose eternity in grateful lays,
And fill Heaven's wide circumference with praise.

But I attempt the wondrous height in vain,
And leave unfinish'd the too lofty strain :
What boldly I begin, let others end ;
My strength exhausted, fainting I descend,
And choose a less, but no ignoble theme,
Dissolving elements, and worlds in flame.

The fatal period, the great hour, is come,
And Nature shrinks at her approaching doom ;
Loud peals of thunder give the sign, and all
Heaven's terrors in array surround the ball ;
Sharp lightnings with the meteors' blaze conspire,
And, darted downward, set the world on fire .
Black rising clouds the thicken'd ether choke,
And spiry flames dart through the rolling smoke ,
With keen vibrations cut the sullen night,
And strike the darken'd sky with dreadful light ;
From Heaven's four regions, with immortal force,
Angels drive on the winds' impetuous course,
To enrage the flame ; it spreads, it soars on high,
Swells in the storm, and bellows through the sky :
Here winding pyramids of fire ascend,
Cities and deserts in one ruin blend ;

Here blazing volumes, wafted, overwhelm
The spacious face of a far distant realm ;
There, undermined, down rush eternal hills,
The neighbouring vales the vast destruction fills.

Hear'st thou that dreadful crack ; that sound
which broke

Like peals of thunder, and the centre shook ?
What wonders must that groan of Nature tell ?
Olympus there, and mightier Atlas, fell,
Which seem'd, above the reach of Fate, to stand
A towering monument of God's right-hand ;
Now dust and smoke, whose brow so lately spread
O'er shelter'd countries its diffusive shade.

Show me that celebrated spot, where all
The various rulers of the sever'd ball
Have humbly sought wealth, honour, and redress,
That land which Heaven seem'd diligent to bless,
Once call'd Britannia ; can her glories end ?
And can't surrounding seas her realms defend ?
Alas ! in flames behold surrounding seas !
Like oil, their waters but augment the blaze.


Some angel say, where ran proud Asia's bound ?
Or where with fruits was fair Europa crown'd ?
Where stretch'd waste Libya ? where did India's
store

Sparkle in diamonds, and her golden ore ?
Each lost in each, their mingling kingdoms glow,
And all dissolved, one fiery deluge flow :
Thus earth's contending monarchies are join'd,
And a full period of ambition find.

And now whate'er or swims, or walks, or flies,
Inhabitants of sea, or earth, or skies ;
All on whom Adam's wisdom fix'd a name,
All plunge, and perish in the conquering flame.

This globe alone would but defraud the fire,
Starve its devouring rage ; the flakes aspire,
And catch the clouds, and make the heavens their
The sun, the moon, the stars, all melt away ; [prey:
All, all is lost ; no monument, no sign,
Where once so proudly blazed the gay machine.
So bubbles on the foaming stream expire ;
So sparks that scatter from the kindling fire ;
The devastations of one dreadful hour
The great Creator's six days' work devour :
A mighty, mighty ruin ! yet one soul
Has more to boast, and far outweighs the whole ;
Exalted in superior excellence,
Casts down to nothing such a vast expense.
Have ye not seen the eternal mountains nod,
An earth dissolving, a descending God ?
What strange surprises through all nature ran !
For whom these revolutions but for man ?
For him Omnipotence new measures takes ;
For him through all eternity awakes ;
Pours on him gifts sufficient to supply
Heaven's loss, and with fresh glories fill the sky.

Think deeply then, O Man ! how great thou art ;
Pay thyself homage with a trembling heart ;
What angels guard no longer dare neglect ;
Slighting thyself, affront not God's respect.
Enter the sacred temple of thy breast,
And gaze and wander there, a ravish'd guest ;
Gaze on those hidden treasures thou shalt find ;
Wander through all the glories of thy mind :
Of perfect knowledge, see, the dawning light
Foretels a noon most exquisitely bright !
Here springs of endless joy are breaking forth :
There buds the promise of celestial worth ;



Worth, which must ripen in a happier clime,
And brighter sun, beyond the bounds of time.
Thou, minor, canst not guess thy vast estate :
What stores, on foreign coasts, thy landing wait :
Lose not thy claim ; let Virtue's paths be trod :
Thus glad all Heaven, and please that bounteous
God,
Who, to light thee to pleasures, hung on high
Yon radiant orb, proud regent of the sky :
That service done, its beams shall fade away,
And God shine forth in one eternal day.

PARAPHRASE ON JOB.

THRICE happy Job long lived in regal state,
Nor saw the sumptuous East a prince so great ;
Whose worldly stores in such abundance flow'd,
Whose heart with such exalted virtue glow'd.
At length misfortunes take their turn to reign,
And ills on ills succeed, a dreadful train !
What now but deaths, and poverty, and wrong,
The sword wide-wasting, the reproachful tongue,
And spotted plagues, that mark'd his limbs all o'er
So thick with pains, they wanted room for more ?
A change so sad what mortal heart could bear ?
Exhausted woe had left him naught to fear,
But gave him all to grief. Low earth he press'd,
Wept in the dust, and sorely smote his breast.
His friends around the deep affliction mourn'd,
Felt all his pangs, and groan for groan return'd ;
In anguish of their hearts their mantles rent,
And seven long days in solemn silence spent ;
A debt of reverence to distress so great !
Then Job contain'd no more, but cursed his fate.
His day of birth, its inauspicious light,
He wishes sunk in shades of endless night,
And blotted from the year ; nor fears to crave
Death, instant death, impatient for the grave,
That seat of peace, that mansion of repose,
Where rest and mortals are no longer foes ;

Where counsellors are hush'd, and mighty kings
(O happy turn !) no more are wretched things.
His words were daring, and displeased his friends ;
His conduct they reprove, and he defends ;
And now they kindled into warm debate,
And sentiments opposed with equal heat :
Fix'd in opinion, both refuse to yield,
And summon all their reason to the field :
So high, at length, their arguments were wrought,
They reach'd the last extent of human thought.
A pause ensued :—when, lo ! Heaven interposed,
And awfully the long contention closed.
Full o'er their heads, with terrible surprise,
A sudden whirlwind blacken'd all the skies :
(They saw, and trembled.) from the darkness
broke

A dreadful voice, and thus the Almighty spoke :
' Who gives his tongue a loose so bold and vain,
Censures my conduct, and reproves my reign ;
Lifts up his thought against me from the dust,
And tells the world's Creator what is just ?
Of late so brave, now lift a dauntless eye,
Face my demand, and give it a reply.
Where didst thou dwell at Nature's early birth ?
Who laid foundations for the spacious earth ?
Who on its surface did extend the line,
Its form determine, and its bulk confine ?
Who fix'd the corner-stone ? what hand, declare,
Hung it on naught, and fasten'd it in air,
When the bright morning stars in concert sung,
When Heaven's high arch with loud hosannas rung,
When shouting sons of God the triumph crown'd,
And the wide concave thunder'd with the sound ?

Earth's numerous kingdoms, hast thou view'd
them all ?

And can thy span of knowledge grasp the ball ?
Who heaved the mountain which sublimely stands,
And casts its shadow into distant lands ?

Who, stretching forth his sceptre o'er the deep,
Can that wild world in due subjection keep ?—

‘ I broke the globe, I scoop'd its hollow'd side,
And did a bason for the floods provide :

I chain'd them with my word ; the boiling sea,
Work'd up in tempests, hears my great decree :

“ Thus far thy floating tide shall be convey'd ;
And here, O main ! be thy proud billows stay'd.”

‘ Hast thou explored the secrets of the deep,
Where, shut from use, unnumber'd treasures sleep ?

Where, down a thousand fathoms from the day,
Springs the great fountain, mother of the sea ?

Those gloomy paths did thy bold foot e'er tread,
Whole worlds of waters rolling o'er thy head ?

‘ Hath the cleft centre open'd wide to thee ?

Death's inmost chambers didst thou ever see ?

E'er knock at his tremendous gate, and wade

To the black portal through the incumbent shade ?
Deep are those shades ; but shades still deeper
hide

My counsels from the ken of human pride.

‘ Where dwells the Light ? in what refulgent
dome ?

And where has Darkness made her dismal home ?

Thou know'st, no doubt, since thy large heart is
fraught

With ripen'd wisdom through long ages brought,

Since Nature was call'd forth when thou wast by,

And into being rose beneath thine eye !

' Are mists begotten ? who their father knew ?
From whom descend the pearly drops of dew ?
To bind the stream by night what hand can boast,
Or whiten morning with the hoary frost ?
Whose powerful breath, from northern regions
blown,

Touches the sea, and turns it into stone ?
A sudden desert spreads o'er realms defaced,
And lays one half of the creation waste ?


' Thou know'st me not ; thy blindness cannot see
How vast a distance parts thy God from thee.
Canst thou in whirlwinds mount aloft ? canst thou
In clouds and darkness wrap thy awful brow ?
And, when day triumphs in meridian light,
Put forth thy hand, and shade the world with night ?

' Who launch'd the clouds in air, and bid them roll,
Suspended seas aloft, from pole to pole ?
Who can refresh the burning sandy plain,
And quench the summer with a waste of rain ?
Who in rough deserts, far from human toil,
Made rocks bring forth, and desolation smile ?
There blooms the rose where human face ne'er
shone,

And spreads its beauties to the sun alone.

' To check the shower who lifts his hand on high,
And shuts the sluices of the exhausted sky,
When earth no longer mourns her gaping veins,
Her naked mountains, and her russet plains,
But, new in life, a cheerful prospect yields
Of shining rivers, and of verdant fields ;
When groves and forests lavish all their bloom,
And earth and heaven are fill'd with rich perfume ?

' Hast thou e'er scaled my wintry skies, and seen
Of hail and snows my northern magazine ?



These the dread treasures of mine anger are,
My funds of vengeance for the day of war,
When clouds rain death and storms at my command,

Rage through the world, or waste a guilty land.

‘ Who taught the rapid winds to fly so fast,
Or shakes the centre with his eastern blast ?
Who from the skies can a whole deluge pour ?
Who strikes through Nature with the solemn roar
Of dreadful thunder, points it where to fall,
And in fierce lightning wraps the flying ball ?—
Not he who trembles at the darted fires,
Falls at the sound, and in the flash expires.

‘ Who drew the comet out to such a size,
And pour’d his flaming train o’er half the skies ?
Did thy resentment hang him out ? Does he
Glare on the nations, and denounce from thee ?

‘ Who on low earth can moderate the rein
That guides the stars along the ethereal plain ?
Appoint their seasons, and direct their course,
Their lustre brighten, and supply their force ?
Canst thou the skies’ benevolence restrain,
And cause the Pleiades to shine in vain ?
Or, when Orion sparkles from his sphere,
Thaw the cold season, and unbind the year ?
Bid Mazzaroth his destined station know,
And teach the bright Arcturus where to glow ?
Mine is the night, with all her stars ; I pour
Myriads, and myriads I reserve in store.

‘ Dost thou pronounce where Day-light shall be
born,
And draw the purple curtain of the Morn ?
Awake the Sun, and bid him come away,
And glad thy world with his obsequious ray ?

Hast thou, enthroned in flaming glory, driven
Triumphant round the spacious ring of Heaven ?
That pomp of light, what hand so far displays,
That distant earth lies basking in the blaze ?

‘ Who did the soul with her rich powers invest,
And light up reason in the human breast,
To shine, with fresh increase of lustre bright,
When stars and sun are set in endless night ?
To these my various questions make reply :—
The Almighty spoke, and, speaking, shook the sky.

What then, Chaldean Sire ! was thy surprise ?
Thus thou, with trembling heart, and downcast
eyes :

‘ Once and again, which I in groans deplore,
My tongue has err’d, but shall presume no more.
My voice is in eternal silence bound,
And all my soul falls prostrate to the ground.’

He ceased : when, lo ! again the Almighty spoke ;
The same dread voice from the black whirlwind
broke :—

‘ Can that arm measure with an arm divine ?
And canst thou thunder with a voice like mine ?
Or in the hollow of thy hand contain
The bulk of waters, the wide-spreading main,
When, mad with tempests, all the billows rise
In all their rage, and dash the distant skies ?

‘ Come forth, in Beauty’s excellence array’d,
And be the grandeur of thy power display’d ;
Put on omnipotence, and, frowning, make
The spacious round of the creation shake ;
Dispatch thy vengeance, bid it overthrow
Triumphant Vice, lay lofty tyrants low,
And crumble them to dust. When this is done,
I grant thy safety lodged in thee alone ;

Of thee thou art, and mayst undaunted stand
Behind the buckler of thine own right hand.

‘ Fond man ! the vision of a moment made,
Dream of a dream, and shadow of a shade !
What worlds hast thou produced, what creatures
framed,

What insects cherish’d, that thy God is blamed ?
When, pain’d with hunger, the wild raven’s brood
Loud calls on God, importunate for food ;
Who hears their cry, who grants their hoarse request,
And stills the clamour of the craving nest ?

‘ Who in the stupid ostrich has subdued
A parent’s care, and fond inquietude ?
While far she flies, her scatter’d eggs are found,
Without an owner, on the sandy ground ;
Cast out on fortune, they at mercy lie,
And borrow life from an indulgent sky ;
Adopted by the sun, in blaze of day,
They ripen under his prolific ray :
Unmindful she that some unhappy tread
May crush her young in their neglected bed :
What time she skims along the field with speed,
She scorns the rider, and pursuing steed.

‘ How rich the peacock ! what bright glories run
From plume to plume, and vary in the sun !
He proudly spreads them to the golden ray,
Gives all his colours, and adorns the day ;
With conscious state the spacious round displays,
And slowly moves amid the waving blaze.

‘ Who taught the hawk to find, in seasons wise,
Perpetual summer, and a change of skies ?
When clouds deform the year, she mounts the wind,
Shoots to the south, nor fears the storm behind ;

The sun returning, she returns again,
Lives in his beams, and leaves ill days to men.
‘ Though strong the hawk, though practised
 well to fly,
An eagle drops her in a lower sky ;
An eagle, when, deserting human sight,
She seeks the sun in her unwearied flight :
Did thy command her yellow pinion lift
So high in air, and seat her on the clift,
Where far above thy world she dwells alone,
And proudly makes the strength of rocks her own ;
Thence wide o’er nature takes her dread survey,
And with a glance predestinates her prey ?
She feasts her young with blood, and, hovering o’er
The unslaughter’d host, enjoys the promised gore.
‘ Know’st thou how many moons, by me assign’d,
Roll o’er the mountain goat, and forest hind,
While, pregnant, they a mother’s load sustain ?
They bend in anguish, and cast forth their pain.
Hale are their young, from human frailties freed,
Walk unsustain’d, and unassisted feed ;
They live at once, forsake the dam’s warm side ;
Take the wide world, with Nature for their guide ;
Bound o’er the lawn, or seek the distant glade,
And find a home in each delightful shade.
‘ Will the tall reem, which knows no lord but me,
Low at the crib, and ask an alms of thee ;
Submit his unworn shoulder to the yoke,
Break the stiff clod, and o’er thy furrow smoke ?
Since great his strength, go trust him, void of
 care ;
Lay on his neck the toil of all the year ;
Bid him bring home the seasons to thy doors,
And cast his load among thy gather’d stores.

‘ Didst thou from service the wild ass discharge,
And break his bonds, and bid him live at large ;
Through the wide waste, his ample mansion, roam,
And lose himself in his unbounded home ?
By Nature’s hand magnificently fed,
His meal is on the range of mountains spread ;
As in pure air aloft he bounds along,
He sees in distant smoke the city throng ;
Conscious of freedom, scorns the smother’d train,
The threatening driver, and the servile rein.

‘ Survey the warlike horse ! didst thou invest
With thunder his robust distended chest ?
No sense of fear his dauntless soul allays ;
’Tis dreadful to behold his nostrils blaze :
To paw the vale he proudly takes delight,
And triumphs in the fulness of his might :
High-raised, he snuffs the battle from afar,
And burns to plunge amid the raging war ;
And mocks at death, and throws his foam around,
And in a storm of fury shakes the ground.
How does his firm, his rising heart, advance
Full on the brandish’d sword and shaken lance,
While his fix’d eyeballs meet the dazzling shield,
Gaze, and return the lightning of the field !
He sinks the sense of pain in generous pride,
Nor feels the shaft that trembles in his side ;
But neighs to the shrill trumpet’s dreadful blast
Till death, and when he groans, he groans his last.

‘ But, fiercer still, the lordly lion stalks,
Grimly majestic in his lonely walks ;
When round he glares, all living creatures fly ;
He clears the desert with his rolling eye.
Say, mortal ! does he rouse at thy command,
And roar to thee, and live upon thy hand ?

Dost thou for him in forests bend thy bow,
And to his gloomy den the morsel throw,
Where bent on death lie hid his tawny brood,
And, couch'd in dreadful ambush, pant for blood ;
Or, stretch'd on broken limbs, consume the day,
In darkness wrapp'd, and slumber o'er their prey ?
By the pale moon they take their destined round,
And lash their sides, and furious tear the ground.
Now shrieks and dying groans the desert fill ;
They rage, they rend ; their ravenous jaws distil
With crimson foam ; and when the banquet's o'er,
They stride away, and paint their steps with gore :
In flight alone the shepherd puts his trust,
And shudders at the talon in the dust.

‘ Mild is my behemoth, though large his frame ;
Smooth is his temper, and repress'd his flame,
While unprovoked. This native of the flood
Lifts his broad foot, and puts ashore for food ;
Earth sinks beneath him as he moves along
To seek the herbs, and mingle with the throng.
See, with what strength his harden'd loins are
bound,

All over proof, and shut against a wound !
How like a mountain-cedar moves his tail !
Nor can his complicated sinews fail.
Built high and wide, his solid bones surpass
The bars of steel ; his ribs are ribs of brass ;
His port majestic, and his armed jaw,
Give the wide forest and the mountain law :
The mountains feed him ; there the beasts admire
The mighty stranger, and in dread retire ;
At length his greatness nearer they survey,
Graze in his shadow, and his eye obey.
The fens and marshes are his cool retreat,
His noon-tide shelter from the burning heat ;

'Their sedgy bosoms his wide couch are made,
And groves of willows give him all their shade.
His eye drinks Jordan up, when, fired with drought,
He trusts to turn its current down his throat;
In lessen'd waves it creeps along the plain;
He sinks a river, and he thirsts again.

' Go to the Nile, and, from its fruitful side,
Cast forth thy line into the swelling tide;
With slender hair leviathan command,
And stretch his vastness on the loaded strand.
Will he become thy servant? will he own
Thy lordly nod, and tremble at thy frown?
Or with his sport amuse thy leisure day,
And, bound in silk, with thy soft maidens play?

' Shall pompous banquets swell with such a prize?
And the bowl journey round his ample size;
Or the debating merchants share the prey,
And various limbs to various marts convey?
Through his firm skull what steel its way can win?
What forceful engine can subdue his skin?
Fly far, and live; tempt not his matchless might;
The bravest shrink to cowards in his sight;
The rashest dare not rouse him up: who then
Shall turn on me, among the sons of men?

' Am I a debtor? hast thou ever heard
Whence come the gifts which are on me conferr'd?
My lavish fruit a thousand valleys fills,
And mine the herds that graze a thousand hills:
Earth, sea, and air, all Nature is my own,
And stars and sun are dust beneath my throne;
And darest thou with the world's great Father vie,
Thou, who dost tremble at my creature's eye?

' At full my huge leviathan shall rise,
Boast all his strength, and spread his wondrous
size:

Who, great in arms, e'er stripp'd his shining mail,
Or crown'd his triumph with a single scale ?
Whose heart sustains him to draw near ? Behold,
Destruction yawns ; his spacious jaws unfold,
And, marshall'd round the wide expanse, disclose
Teeth edg'd with death, and crowding rows on
rows.

What hideous fangs on either side arise,
And what a deep abyss between them lies !
Mete with thy lance, and with thy plummet sound ;
The one how long, the other how profound !
His bulk is charged with such a furious soul,
That clouds of smoke from his spread nostrils roll
As from a furnace ; and, when roused his ire,
Fate issues from his jaws in streams of fire.
The rage of tempests, and the roar of seas,
Thy terror, this thy great superior please :
Strength on his ample shoulder sits in state ;
His well-join'd limbs are dreadfully complete ;
His flakes of solid flesh are slow to part ;
As steel his nerves, as adamant his heart.
When, late awaked, he rears him from the floods,
And, stretching forth his stature to the clouds,
Writhes in the sun aloft his scaly height,
And strikes the distant hills with transient light,
Far round are fatal damps of terror spread ;
The mighty fear, nor blush to own their dread.
Large is his front ; and when his burnish'd eyes
Lift their broad lids, the morning seems to rise.
In vain may death in various shapes invade,
The swift-wing'd arrow, the descending blade ;
His naked breast their impotence defies ;
The dart rebounds, the brittle falchion flies.
Shut in himself, the war without he hears,
Safe in the tempest of their rattling spears ;

The cumber'd strand their wasted volleys strow ;
His sport the rage and labour of the foe.
His pastimes like a caldron boil the flood,
And blacken ocean with the rising mud ;
The billows feel him as he works his way ;
His hoary footsteps shine along the sea ;
The foam high-wrought, with white divides the
green,

And distant sailors point where death has been.
His like earth bears not on her spacious face ;
Alone in nature stands his dauntless race,
For utter ignorance of fear renown'd :
In wrath he rolls his baleful eye around ;
Makes every sworn disdainful heart subside,
And holds dominion o'er the sons of Pride.'

Then the Chaldean eased his labouring breast,
With full conviction of his crime oppress'd :—

' Thou canst accomplish all things, Lord of
Might !

And every thought is naked to thy sight :
But, O ! thy ways are wonderful, and lie
Beyond the deepest reach of mortal eye.
Oft have I heard of thine Almighty power,
But never saw thee till this dreadful hour.
O'erwhelm'd with shame, the Lord of Life I see,
Abhor myself, and give my soul to thee :
Nor shall my weakness tempt thine anger more :
Man is not made to question, but adore.'

COLLINS.

ODE ON THE PASSIONS,

AND

OTHER POEMS.



COLLINS.
ODE ON THE PASSIONS,
ETC.



With eyes uprais'd as one inspir'd,
 Pale Melancholy sat retir'd.



COLLINS.



THE PASSIONS.

FOR MUSIC.

WHEN Music, heavenly maid, was young,
While yet in early Greece she sung,
The Passions oft, to hear her shell,
Throng'd around her magic cell,
Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
Possess'd beyond the Muse's painting ;
By turns they felt the glowing mind
Disturb'd, delighted, raised, refined ;
'Till once, 'tis said, when all were fired,
Fill'd with fury, rapt, inspired,
From the supporting myrtles round
They snatch'd her instruments of sound ;
And, as they oft had heard apart
Sweet lessons of her forceful art,
Each (for Madness ruled the hour)
Would prove his own expressive power.

First Fear his hand, its skill to try,
Amid the chords bewilder'd laid,
And back recoil'd he knew not why,
Ev'n at the sound himself had made.

Next Anger rush'd ; his eyes on fire,
In lightnings own'd his secret stings :
In one rude clash he struck the lyre,
And swept with hurried hand the strings.

With woful measures wan Despair—
Low, sullen sounds his grief beguiled ;
A solemn, strange, and mingled air ;
'Twas sad by fits, by starts 'twas wild.

But thou, O Hope, with eyes so fair,
What was thy delighted measure ?
Still it whisper'd promised pleasure,
And bade the lovely scenes at distance hail !
Still would her touch the strain prolong ;
And from the rocks, the woods, the vale,
She call'd on Echo still, through all the song ;
And, where her sweetest theme she chose,
A soft responsive voice was heard at every close ;
And Hope enchanted smiled, and waved her golden
hair :

And longer had she sung ; but, with a frown,
Revenge impatient rose :
He threw his blood-stain'd sword in thunder
down ;
And, with a withering look,
The war-denouncing trumpet took,
And blew a blast so loud and dread,
Were ne'er prophetic sounds so full of woe !
And, ever and anon, he beat
The doubling drum with furious heat ;
And though, sometimes, each dreary pause be-
tween,

Dejected Pity, at his side,
Her soul-subduing voice applied,
Yet still he kept his wild unalter'd mien,
While each strain'd ball of sight seem'd bursting
from his head.

Thy numbers, Jealousy, to naught were fix'd :
Sad proof of thy distressful state !
Of differing themes the veering song was mix'd ;
And now it courted Love, now raving call'd on
Hate.

With eyes upraised, as one inspired,
Pale Melancholy sat retired ;
And, from her wild sequester'd seat,
In notes by distance made more sweet,
Pour'd through the mellow horn her pensive soul :
And, dashing soft from rocks around,
Bubbling runnels join'd the sound ;
Through glades and glooms the mingled measure
stole,
Or, o'er some haunted stream, with fond delay,
Round a holy calm diffusing,
Love of peace, and lonely musing,
In hollow murmurs died away.

But O ! how alter'd was its sprightlier tone,
When Cheerfulness, a nymph of healthiest hue,
Her bow across her shoulder flung,
Her buskins gemm'd with morning dew,
Blew an inspiring air, that dale and thicket rung,
The hunter's call, to Faun and Dryad known.

The oak-crown'd Sisters, and their chaste-eyed
Queen,
Satyrs and Sylvan Boys were seen
Peeping from forth their alleys green :
Brown Exercise rejoiced to hear ;
And Sport leap'd up, and seized his beechen spear.

Last came Joy's ecstatic trial ;
He, with viny crown advancing,
First to the lively pipe his hand address'd ;
But soon he saw the brisk awakening viol,
Whose sweet entrancing voice he loved the best :
They would have thought who heard the strain,
They saw, in Tempe's vale, her native maids,
Amidst the festal sounding shades,
To some unwearied minstrel dancing,
While, as his flying fingers kiss'd the strings,
Love framed with Mirth a gay fantastic round :
Loose were her tresses seen, her zone unbound ;
And he, amidst his frolic play,
As if he would the charming air repay,
Shook thousand odours from his dewy wings.

O Music ! sphere-descended maid,
Friend of Pleasure, Wisdom's aid !
Why, goddess ! why, to us denied,
Lay'st thou thy ancient lyre aside ?
As, in that loved Athenian bower,
You learn'd an all-commanding power ;
'Thy mimic soul, O Nymph endear'd !
Can well recall what then it heard.
Where is thy native simple heart,
Devote to Virtue, Fanc'y, Art ?

Arise, as in that elder time,
Warm, energetic, chaste, sublime !
Thy wonders, in that godlike age,
Fill thy recording Sister's page—
'Tis said, and I believe the tale,
Thy humblest reed could more prevail,
Had more of strength, diviner rage,
Than all which charms this laggard age ;
Ev'n all at once together found
Cecilia's mingled world of sound—
O bid our vain endeavours cease ;
Revive the just designs of Greece :
Return in all thy simple state :
Confirm the tales her sons relate !

O D E
ON THE POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS OF THE
HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND :
CONSIDERED AS THE SUBJECT OF POETRY.
INSCRIBED TO MR. JOHN HOME.

HOMER! thou return'st from Thames, whose Naiads
long
Have seen thee lingering with a fond delay,
'Mid those soft friends, whose hearts, some fu-
ture day,
Shall melt, perhaps, to hear thy tragic song.
Go, not unmindful of that cordial youth¹
Whom, long endear'd, thou leavest by Lavant's
side ;
Together let us wish him lasting truth,
And joy untainted, with his destined bride.
Go ! nor regardless, while these numbers boast
My short-lived bliss, forget my social name ;
But think, far off, how, on the southern coast,
I met thy friendship with an equal flame !
Fresh to that soil thou turn'st, where every vale
Shall prompt the Poet, and his song demand :
To thee thy copious subjects ne'er shall fail ;
Thou need'st but take thy pencil to thy hand,
And paint what all believe, who own thy genial
land.

¹ A gentleman of the name of Barrow, who introduced Home to Collins.

There, must thou wake perforce thy Doric quill ;
 'Tis Fancy's land to which thou sett'st thy feet ;
 Where still, 'tis said, the fairy people meet,
 Beneath each birken shade, on mead or hill.
 There, each trim lass, that skims the milky store,
 To the swart tribes their creamy bowls allots ; -
 By night they sip it round the cottage door,
 While airy minstrels warble jocund notes.
 There, every herd, by sad experience, knows
 How, wing'd with fate, their elf-shot arrows fly,
 When the sick ewe her summer food foregoes,
 Or, stretch'd on earth, the heart-smit heifers lie.
 Such airy beings awe the untutor'd swain :
 Nor thou, though learn'd, his homelier thoughts
 neglect ;
 Let thy sweet Muse the rural faith sustain ;
 These are the themes of simple, sure effect,
 That add new conquests to her boundless reign,
 And fill, with double force, her heart-commanding
 strain.

Ev'n yet preserved, how often mayst thou hear,
 Where to the pole the Boreal mountains run,
 Taught by the father to his listening son,
 Strange lays, whose power had charm'd a Spenser's
 ear !
 At every pause, before thy mind possess'd,
 Old Runic bards shall seem to rise around,
 With uncouth lyres, in many-colour'd vest,
 Their matted hair with boughs fantastic crown'd :
 Whether thou bid'st the well-taught hind repeat
 The choral dirge, that mourns some chieftain
 brave,
 When every shrieking maid her bosom beat,
 And strew'd with choicest herbs his scented grave !

Or whether, sitting in the shepherd's shiel,^a
Thou hear'st some sounding tale of war's alarms;
When at the bugle's call, with fire and steel,
The sturdy clans pour'd forth their brawny
 swarms,
And hostile brothers met, to prove each other's
 arms!

'Tis thine to sing, how, framing hideous spells,
In Sky's lone isle, the gifted wizard-seer,
Lodged in the wintry cave with Fate's fell spear,
Or in the depth of Uist's dark forest dwells:
How they, whose sight such dreary dreams en-
 gross,
With their own visions oft astonish'd droop,
When, o'er the watery strath, or quaggy moss,
They see the gliding ghosts unbodied troop:
Or, if in sports, or on the festive green,
Their destined glance some fated youth descry,
Who now, perhaps, in lusty vigour seen,
And rosy health, shall soon lamented die.
For them the viewless forms of air obey,
Their bidding heed, and at their beck repair:
They know what spirit brews the stormful day,
And heartless, oft like moody madness, stare
To see the phantom train their secret work prepare.

To monarchs dear, some hundred miles astray,
Oft have they seen Fate give the fatal blow!
The seer, in Sky, shriek'd as the blood did flow,
When headless Charles warm on the scaffold lay!

^a A summer hut, built in the high part of the mountains, to tend their flocks in the warm season, when the pasture is fine.

As Boreas threw his young Aurora³ forth,
 In the first year of the first George's reign,
 And battles raged in welkin of the North,
 They mourn'd in air, fell, fell Rebellion slain !
 And as, of late, they joy'd in Preston's fight,
 Saw, at sad Falkirk, all their hopes near crown'd ;
 They raved, divining, through their second sight,⁴
 Pale, red Culloden, where these hopes were
 drown'd.

Illustrious William !⁵ Britain's guardian name !
 One William saved us from a tyrant's stroke :
 He, for a sceptre, gain'd heroic fame ;
 But thou, more glorious, Slavery's chain hast
 broke,
 To reign a private man, and bow to Freedom's yoke !

These, too, thou 'lt sing ! for well thy magic Muse
 Can to the topmost heaven of grandeur soar ;
 Or stoop to wail the swain that is no more !
 Ah, homely swains ! your homeward steps ne'er
 lose :

Let not dank Will⁶ mislead you to the heath ;
 Dancing in murky night, o'er fen and lake,

³ By young Aurora, Collins undoubtedly meant the first appearance of the northern lights, which happened about the year 1715 ; at least, it is most highly probable, from this peculiar circumstance, that no ancient writer whatever has taken any notice of them, nor even any one modern, previous to the above period.

⁴ Second sight is the term that is used for the divination of the Highlanders.

⁵ The late Duke of Cumberland, who defeated the Pretender at the battle of Culloden.

⁶ A fiery meteor, called by various names, such as Will with the Wisp, Jack with the Lantern, &c. It hovers in the air over marshy and fenny places.

He glows to draw you downward to your death,
In his bewitch'd, low, marshy, willow brake.

What though far off, from some dark dell espied,
His glimmering mazes cheer the excursive sight,
Yet turn, ye wanderers, turn your steps aside,
Nor trust the guidance of that faithless light :
For watchful, lurking, 'mid the unrustling reed,
At those murk hours the wily monster lies,
And listens oft to hear the passing steed,
And frequent round him rolls his sullen eyes,
If chance his savage wrath may some weak wretch
surprise.

Ah, luckless swain, o'er all unblest'd, indeed !
Whom late bewilder'd in the dank, dark fen,
Far from his flocks, and smoking hamlet, then !
To that sad spot where hums the sedgy weed :
On him, enraged, the fiend, in angry mood,
Shall never look with Pity's kind concern ;
But instant, furious, raise the whelming flood
O'er its drown'd banks, forbidding all return !
Or, if he meditate his wish'd escape
To some dim hill, that seems uprising near
To his faint eye, the grim and grisly shape,
In all its terrors clad, shall wild appear.
Meantime the watery surge shall round him rise,
Pour'd sudden forth from every swelling source.
What now remains but tears and hopeless sighs ?
His fear-shook limbs have lost their youthful force,
And down the waves he floats, a pale and breath-
less corse !

For him in vain his anxious wife shall wait,
Or wander forth to meet him on his way :

For him in vain at to-fall of the day,
 His babes shall linger at the unclosing gate!
 Ah, ne'er shall he return! Alone, if Night
 Her travell'd limbs in broken slumbers steep;
 With drooping willows dress'd, his mournful sprite
 Shall visit sad, perchance, her silent sleep:
 Then he, perhaps, with moist and watery hand
 Shall fondly seem to press her shuddering cheek,
 And with his blue swoln face before her stand,
 And shivering cold, these pitcous accents speak:
 'Pursue, dear wife, thy daily toils; pursue,
 At dawn or dusk, industrious as before;
 Nor e'er of me one helpless thought renew,
 While I lie weltering on the osier'd shore,
 Drown'd by the Kelpie's⁷ wrath, nor e'er shall aid
 thee more!'

Unbounded is thy range; with varied skill
 Thy Muse may, like those feathery tribes which
 spring
 From their rude rocks, extend her skirting wing
 Round the moist marge of each cold Hebrid isle,
 To that hoar pile⁸ which still its ruins shows;
 In whose small vaults a pigmy-folk is found,
 Whose bones the delver with his spade upthrows,
 And culls them, wondering, from the hallow'd
 ground!
 Or thither,⁹ where beneath the showery west,
 The mighty kings of three fair realms are laid:

⁷ The water fiend.

⁸ One of the Hebrides is called the Isle of Pigmies; where, it is reported, several miniature bones of the human species have been dug up in the ruins of a chapel.

⁹ Icolmkill, one of the Hebrides, where near sixty of the ancient Scottish, Irish, and Norwegian kings are interred.

Once foes, perhaps, together now they rest,
No slaves revere them, and no wars invade :
Yet frequent now, at midnight's solemn hour,
The rifted mounds their yawning cells unfold,
And forth the monarchs stalk with sovereign power,
In pageant robes, and wreathed with sheeny gold,
And on their twilight tombs aërial council hold.

But, O ! o'er all, forget not Kilda's race,
On whose bleak rocks, which brave the wasting
tides,

Fair Nature's daughter, Virtue, yet abides.
Go ! just, as they, their blameless manners trace ;
Then to my ear transmit some gentle song,
Of those whose lives are yet sincere and plain,
Their bounded walks the rugged cliffs along,
And all their prospect but the wintry main.

With sparing temperance, at the needful time,
They drain the scented spring : or, hunger-press'd,
Along the Atlantic rock, undreading climb,
And of its eggs despoil the solan's ¹⁰ nest.

Thus, bless'd in primal innocence they live,
Sufficed and happy with that frugal fare
Which tasteful toil and hourly danger give :
Hard is their shallow soil, and bleak and bare ;
Nor ever vernal bee was heard to murmur there !

Nor need'st thou blush that such false themes engage
Thy gentle mind, of fairer stores possess'd ;
For not alone they touch the village breast,
But fill'd, in elder time, the historic page.

¹⁰ An aquatic bird like a goose, on the eggs of which the inhabitants of St. Kilda, another of the Hebrides, chiefly subsist.

There, Shakspeare's self, with every garland
 crown'd,
 Flew to those fairy climes his fancy sheen,
 In musing hour ; his wayward sisters found,
 And with their terrors dress'd the magic scene.
 From them he sung, when 'mid his bold design,
 Before the Scot, afflicted, and aghast,
 The shadowy kings of Banquo's fated line
 Through the dark cave in gleamy pageant pass'd.
 Proceed ! nor quit the tales which, simply told,
 Could once so well my answering bosom pierce ;
 Proceed, in forceful sounds, and colour bold,
 The native legends of thy land rehearse ;
 To such adapt thy lyre, and suit thy powerful verse.

In scenes like these, which, daring to depart
 From sober truth, are still to Nature true,
 And call forth fresh delight to Fancy's view,
 The heroic Muse employ'd her Tasso's art.
 How have I trembled, when, at 'Tancred's stroke,
 Its gushing blood the gaping cypress pour'd !
 When each live plant with mortal accents spoke,
 And the wild blast upheaved the vanish'd sword !
 How have I sat, when piped the pensive wind,
 To hear his harp by British Fairfax strung !
 Prevailing poet ! whose undoubting mind
 Believed the magic wonders which he sung.
 Hence, at each sound, imagination glows ;
 Hence, at each picture, vivid life starts here ;
 Hence his warm lay with softest sweetness flows ;
 Melting it flows, pure, murmuring, strong, and
 clear,
 And fills the impassion'd heart, and wins the har-
 monious ear.

All hail, ye scenes that o'er my soul prevail !
 Ye splendid friths and lakes, which, far away,
 Are by smooth 'Annan ¹¹ fill'd, or pastoral Tay, ¹¹
 Or Don's ¹¹ romantic springs, at distance hail !
 The time shall come, when I, perhaps, may tread
 Your lowly glens, ¹² o'erhung with spreading
 broom ;
 Or o'er your stretching heaths, by Fancy led :
 Or o'er your mountains creep, in awful gloom.
 Then will I dress once more the faded bower,
 Where Jonson ¹³ sat in Drummond's classic shade ;
 Or crop, from Tiviotdale, each lyric flower,
 And mourn, on Yarrow's banks, where Willy's
 laid.
 Meantime, ye Powers, that on the plains which bore
 The cordial youth, on Lothian's plains, ¹⁴ at-
 tend !—
 Where'er Home dwells, on hill, or lowly moor,
 To him I love, your kind protection lend,
 And, touch'd with love like mine, preserve my ab-
 sent friend !

¹¹ Three rivers in Scotland.

¹² Valleys.

¹³ Ben Jonson paid a visit on foot, in 1619, to the Scotch poet Drummond, at his seat of Hawthornden, within four miles of Edinburgh.

¹⁴ Barrow, it seems, was at the Edinburgh University, which is in the county of Lothian.

MR. ERSKINE'S SUPPLEMENT.

The following exquisite supplemental Stanzas to the foregoing Ode will be found to commemorate some striking Scottish superstitions omitted by Collins. They are the production of William Erskine, Esq., advocate, and form a Continuation of the Address, by Collins, to the author of Douglas, exhorting him to celebrate the traditions of Scotland.

THY Muse may tell, how, when at evening's close,
 To meet her love beneath the twilight shade,
 O'er many a broom-clad brae and heathy glade,
 In merry mood the village maiden goes :
 There, on a streamlet's margin as she lies,
 Chanting some carol till her swain appears,
 With visage, deadly pale, in pensive guise,
 Beneath a wither'd fir his form he rears !¹
 Shrieking and sad, she bends her eirie flight,
 When, mid dire heaths, where flits the taper blue,
 The whilst the moon sheds dim a sickly light,
 The airy funeral meets her blasted view.
 When, trembling, weak, she gains her cottage low,
 Where magpies scatter notes of presage wide,
 Some one shall tell, while tears in torrents flow,
 That, just when twilight dimm'd the green hill's
 side,
 Far in his lonely shiel her hapless shepherd died.

Let these sad strains to lighter sounds give place !
 Bid thy brisk viol warble measures gay !

¹ The wraith, or spectral appearance, of a person shortly to die, is a firm article in the creed of Scottish superstition.

For see ! recall'd by thy resistless lay,

Once more the Brownie^a shows his honest face.
Hail, from thy wanderings long, my much-loved
sprite !

Thou friend, thou lover of the lowly, hail !
Tell, in what realms thou sport'st thy merry night,
Trail'st the long mop, or whirl'st the mimic flail.
Where dost thou deck the much-disorder'd hall,
While the tired damsel in Elysium sleeps,
With early voice to drowsy workman call,
Or lull the dame while mirth his vigils keeps ?
'Twas thus in Caledonia's domes, 'tis said,
Thou plyedst the kindly task in years of yore :
At last, in luckless hour, some erring maid
Spread in thy nightly cell of viands store :
Ne'er was thy form beheld among their mountains
more.^a

^a The Brownie formed a class of beings, distinct in habit and disposition from the freakish and mischievous elves. He was meagre, shaggy, and wild in his appearance. Thus, Cleland, in his satire against the Highlanders, compares them to

' Faunes, or *brownies*, if ye will,
Or satyres come from Atlas hill.'

In the day-time, he lurked in remote recesses of the old houses which he delighted to haunt ; and in the night sedulously employed himself in discharging any laborious task which he thought might be acceptable to the family to whose service he had devoted himself. But, although, like Milton's lubbar fiend, he loves to stretch himself by the fire, he does not drudge from the hope of recompense. On the contrary, so delicate is his attachment, that the offer of reward, but particularly of food, infallibly occasions his disappearance for ever.

When the menials in a Scottish family protracted their vigils around the kitchen fire, Brownie, weary of being ex-

'Then wake (for well thou canst) that wondrous lay,
How, while around the thoughtless matrons sleep,
Soft o'er the floor the treacherous fairies creep,
And bear the smiling infant far away.
How starts the nurse, when, for her lovely child,
She sees at dawn a gaping idiot stare!
O snatch the innocent from demons wild,
And save the parents fond from fell despair!
In a deep cave the trusty menials wait,
When from their hilly dens, at midnight's hour,
Forth rush the airy elves in mimic state,
And o'er the moonlight heath with swiftness
scour.
In glittering arms the little horsemen shine :
Last, on a milk-white steed, with targe of gold,
A fay of might appears, whose arms entwine
The lost, lamented child ; the shepherds bold
The unconscious infant tear from his unhallow'd
hold.

cluded from the midnight hearth, sometimes appeared at the door, seemed to watch their departure, and thus admonished them—'Gang a' to your beds, sirs, and dinna put out the wee *grieshoch* (embers).'

It seems no improbable conjecture, that the Brownie is a legitimate descendant of the *Lar Familiaris* of the ancients.

TO EVENING.

Is aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song,
May hope, O pensive Eve, to soothe thine ear,
Like thy own brawling springs,
Thy springs, and dying gales ;

O Nymph reserved, while now the bright-hair'd sun
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
With brede ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy bed ;

Now air is hush'd, save where the weak-eyed bat
With short shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing ;
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum :
Now teach me, maid composed,
To breathe some soften'd strain,

Whose numbers, stealing through thy darkening vale,
May not unseemly with its stillness suit ;
As, musing slow, I hail
Thy genial loved return !

For when thy folding-star arising shows
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp
The fragrant Hours, and Elves
Who slept in buds the day,

And many a Nymph who wreathes her brows with
 sedge,
And sheds the freshening dew ; and, lovelier still,
 The pensive Pleasures sweet,
 Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then let me rove some wild and heathy scene ;
Or find some ruin midst its dreary dells,
 Whose walls more awful nod
 By thy religious gleams.

Or, if chill blustering winds, or driving rain,
Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut,
 That, from the mountain's side,
 Views wilds, and swelling floods,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discover'd spires ;
And hears their simple bell ; and marks o'er all
 Thy dewy fingers draw
 The gradual dusky veil.

While Spring shall pour his showers, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve !
 While Summer loves to sport
 Beneath thy lingering light ;

While fallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves ;
Or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,
 Affrights thy shrinking train,
 And rudely rends thy robes ;

So long, regardful of thy quiet rule,
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, smiling Peace,
 Thy gentlest influence own,
 And love thy favourite name !

TO PEACE.

O THOU, who badest thy turtles bear
Swift from his grasp thy golden hair,
And sought'st thy native skies ;
When War, by vultures drawn from far,
To Britain bent his iron car,
And bade his storms arise !

Tired of his rude tyrannic sway,
Our youth shall fix some festive day,
His sullen shrines to burn :
But thou, who hear'st the turning spheres,
What sounds may charm thy partial ears,
And gain thy bless'd return ?

O Peace, thy injured robes upbind !
O rise, and leave not one behind
Of all thy beamy train !
The British Lion, goddess sweet,
Lies stretch'd on earth, to kiss thy feet,
And own thy holier reign.

Let others court thy transient smile,
But come to grace thy western isle,
By warlike Honour led ;
And, while around her ports rejoice,
While all her sons adore thy choice,
With him for ever wed !


TO PITY.

O THOU, the friend of man, assign'd
With balmy hands his wounds to bind,
And charm his frantic woe :
When first Distress, with dagger keen,
Broke forth to waste his destined scene,
His wild unsated foe !

By Pella's bard, a magic name,
By all the griefs his thought could frame,
Receive my humble rite :
Long, Pity, let the nations view
Thy sky-worn robes of tenderest blue,
And eyes of dewy light !

But wherefore need I wander wide
To old Ilissus' distant side,
Deserted stream, and mute ?
Wild Arun, too, has heard thy strains,
And Echo, midst my native plains,
Been soothed by Pity's lute.

There first the wren thy myrtles shed
On gentlest Otway's infant head,
To him thy cell was shown ;
And while he sung the female heart,
With youth's soft notes, unspoil'd by art,
Thy turtles mix'd their own.



COLLINS.

Come, Pity, come ; by Fancy's aid,
Ev'n now my thoughts, relenting maid,
Thy temple's pride design :
Its southern site, its truth complete,
Shall raise a wild enthusiast heat
In all who view the shrine.

There Picture's toil shall well relate
How chance, or hard involving fate,
O'er mortal bliss prevail :
The buskin'd Muse shall near her stand,
And sighing prompt her tender hand,
With each disastrous tale.

There let me oft, retired by day,
In dreams of passion melt away,
Allow'd with thee to dwell :
There waste the mournful lamp of night,
Till, Virgin, thou again delight
To hear a British shell !

TO SIMPLICITY.

O THOU, by Nature taught
To breathe her genuine thought
In numbers warmly pure, and sweetly strong ;
Who first, on mountains wild,
In Fancy, loveliest child,
Thy babe, and Pleasure's, nursed the powers of song !

Thou, who, with hermit heart,
Disdain'st the wealth of art,
And gauds, and pageant weeds, and trailing pall ;
But comest a decent maid,
In Attic robe array'd,
O chaste, unboastful Nymph, to thee I call !

By all the honey'd store
On Hybla's thymy shore ;
By all her blooms, and mingled murmurs dear ;
By her, whose love-lorn woe,
In evening musings slow,
Soothed sweetly sad Electra's poet's ear :

By old Cephisus deep,
Who spreads his wavy sweep
In warbled wanderings round thy green retreat ;
On whose enamell'd side,
When holy Freedom died,
No equal haunt allured thy future feet.

O sister meek of Truth,
To my admiring youth
Thy sober aid and native charms infuse !

The flowers that sweetest breathe,
Though Beauty cull'd the wreath,
Still ask thy hand to range their order'd hues.

While Rome could none esteem
But virtue's patriot theme,
You loved her hills, and led her laureat band ;
But staid to sing alone
To one distinguish'd throne ;
And turn'd thy face, and fled her alter'd land.

No more in hall or bower
The Passions own thy power ;
Love, only Love, her forceless numbers mean :
For thou hast left her shrine ;
Nor olive more; nor vine,
Shall gain thy feet to bless the servile scene.

Though taste, though genius, bless
To some divine excess,
Faint 's the cold work till thou inspire the whole :
What each, what all supply,
May court, may charm our eye :
Thou, only thou, canst raise the meeting soul !

Of these let others ask,
To aid some mighty task ;
I only seek to find thy temperate vale ;
Where oft my reed might sound
To maids and shepherds round,
And all thy sons, O Nature, learn my tale.



O D E

WRITTEN IN THE BEGINNING OF THE
YEAR 1746.

This, and the succeeding ode, seem to have been written on the same occasion, viz. the rebellion in Scotland : the former, in memory of those heroes who fell in defence of their country ; the latter, to excite sentiments of compassion in favour of those who became a sacrifice to public justice.

**How sleep the brave who sink to rest
By all their country's wishes bless'd !
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallow'd mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.**

**By fairy hands their knell is rung ;
By forms unseen their dirge is sung :
There Honour comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay ;
And Freedom shall awhile repair
To dwell a weeping hermit there.**

TO MERCY.

STROPHE.

O THOU, who sitt'st a smiling bride
By Valour's arm'd and awful side,
Gentlest of sky-born forms, and best adored ;
Who oft with songs, divine to hear,
Winn'st from his fatal grasp the spear,
And hidest in wreaths of flowers his bloodless sword!
Thou who, amidst the deathful field,
By godlike chiefs alone beheld,
Oft with thy bosom bare art found,
Pleading for him the youth who sinks to ground :
See, Mercy, see, with pure and loaded hands,
Before thy shrine my country's genius stands,
And decks thy altar still, though pierced with many
a wound !

ANTISTROPHE.

When he, whom ev'n our joys provoke,
'The fiend of Nature, join'd his yoke,
And rush'd in wrath to make our isle his prey;
Thy form, from out thy sweet abode,
O'ertook him on his blasted road,
And stopp'd his wheels, and look'd his rage away.
I see recoil his sable steeds,
That bore him swift to savage deeds—
Thy tender melting eyes they own.
O maid, for all thy love to Britain shown,
Where Justice bars her iron tower,
To thee we build a roseate bower :
Thou, thou shalt rule our queen, and share our
monarch's throne !

TO A LADY,
ON
THE DEATH OF COLONEL ROSS, IN THE
ACTION AT FONTENOY.

Written in May, 1745.

WHILE, lost to all his former mirth,
Britannia's genius bends to earth,
And mourns the fatal day :
While stain'd with blood, he strives to tear
Unseemly from his sea-green hair
The wreaths of cheerful May :

The thoughts which musing Pity pays,
And fond Remembrance loves to raise,
Your faithful hours attend :
Still Fancy, to herself unkind,
Awakes to grief the soften'd mind,
And points the bleeding friend.

By rapid Scheld's descending wave
His country's vows shall bless the grave
Where'er the youth is laid :
That sacred spot the village hind
With every sweetest turf shall bind,
And Peace protect the shade.

Bless'd youth ! regardful of thy doom,
Aërial hands shall build thy tomb,
With shadowy trophies crown'd :
Whilst Honour, bathed in tears, shall rove
To sigh thy name through every grove,
And call his heroes round.

The warlike dead of every age,
Who fill the fair recording page,
Shall leave their sainted rest ;
And, half reclining on his spear,
Each wondering chief by turns appear,
To hail the blooming guest.

Old Edward's sons, unknown to yield,
Shall crowd from Cressy's laurel'd field,
And gaze with fix'd delight :
Again for Britain's wrongs they feel,
Again they snatch the gleamy steel,
And wish the avenging fight.

But lo, where, sunk in deep despair,
Her garments torn, her bosom bare,
Impatient Freedom lies !
Her matted tresses madly spread,
To every sod, which wraps the dead,
She turns her joyless eyes.

Ne'er shall she leave that lowly ground,
Till notes of triumph bursting round
Proclaim her reign restored ;
Till William seek the sad retreat,
And, bleeding at her sacred feet,
Present the sated sword.

If, weak to soothe so soft a heart,
These pictured glories naught impart
 To dry thy constant tear ;
If yet, in Sorrow's distant eye,
Exposed and pale thou seest him lie,
 Wild War insulting near :

Where'er from time thou court'st relief,
The Muse shall still, with social grief,
 Her gentlest promise keep :
Ev'n humble Harting's cottaged vale
Shall learn the sad repeated tale,
 And bid her shepherds weep.

ON THE
DEATH OF MR. THOMSON.

The scene of the following stanzas is supposed to lie on
the Thames, near Richmond.

IN yonder grave a Druid lies,
Where slowly winds the stealing wave !
The year's best sweets shall duteous rise
To deck its poet's sylvan grave.

In yon deep bed of whispering reeds
His airy harp¹ shall now be laid ;
That he, whose heart in sorrow bleeds,
May love through life the soothing shade.

Then maids and youths shall linger here ;
And, while its sounds at distance swell,
Shall sadly seem in Pity's ear
To hear the woodland pilgrim's knell.

Remembrance oft shall haunt the shore,
When Thames in summer wreaths is dress'd ;
And oft suspend the dashing oar,
To bid his gentle spirit rest !

And oft as ease and health retire
To breezy lawn, or forest deep,
The friend shall view yon whitening spire,²
And mid the varied landscape weep.

¹ The harp of Æolus, of which see a description in the
Castle of Indolence.

² Richmond church, in which Thomson was buried.

But thou who own'st that earthly bed,
Ah, what will every dirge avail?
Or tears which Love and Pity shed,
That mourn beneath the gliding sail?

Yet lives there one whose heedless eye
Shall scorn thy pale shrine glimmering near?
With him, sweet bard! may Fancy die,
And Joy desert the blooming year!

But thou lorn stream, whose sullen tide
No sedge-crown'd Sisters now attend,
Now waft me from the green hill's side
Whose cold turf hides the buried friend!

And see, the fairy valleys fade!
Dun Night has veil'd the solemn view!
Yet once again, dear parted shade,
Meek Nature's child, again adieu!

The genial meads, assign'd to bless
Thy life, shall mourn thy early doom:
There hinds and shepherd-girls shall dress,
With simple hands, thy rural tomb.

Long, long, thy stone and pointed clay
Shall melt the musing Briton's eyes.
'O vales, and wild woods!' shall he say,
'In yonder grave your Druid lies!'

DIRGE IN CYMBELINE.

**SUNG BY GUIDERIUS AND ARVIRAGUS OV
FIDELE, SUPPOSED TO BE DEAD.**

To fair Fidele's grassy tomb
Soft maids and village hinds shall bring
Each opening sweet of earliest bloom,
And rife all the breathing spring.

No wailing ghost shall dare appear
To vex with shrieks this quiet grove ;
But shepherd lads assemble here,
And melting virgins own their love.

No wither'd witch shall here be seen ;
No goblins lead their nightly crew :
The female fays shall haunt the green,
And dress thy grave with pearly dew !

The redbreast oft, at evening hours,
Shall kindly lend his little aid,
With hoary moss, and gather'd flowers,
To deck the ground where thou art laid.

When howling winds, and beating rain,
In tempests shake the sylvan cell ;
Or midst the chase, on every plain,
The tender thought on thee shall dwell :

Each lonely scene shall thee restore ;
For thee the tear be duly shed ;
Beloved till life can charm no more,
And mourn'd till Pity's self be dead.

VERSES

WRITTEN ON A PAPER WHICH CONTAINED
A PIECE OF BRIDE-CAKE.

Ye curious hands, that, hid from vulgar eyes,
By search profane shall find this hallow'd cake;
With virtue's awe forbear the sacred prize,
Nor dare a theft, for love and pity's sake!

This precious relic, form'd by magic power,
Beneath the shepherd's haunted pillow laid,
Was meant by love to charm the silent hour,
The secret present of a matchless maid.

The Cyprian queen, at Hymen's fond request,
Each nice ingredient chose with happiest art:
Fears, sighs, and wishes of the enamour'd breast,
And pains that please, are mix'd in every part.

With rosy hand the spicy fruit she brought
From Paphian hills, and fair Cythera's isle;
And temper'd sweet with these the melting thought,
The kiss ambrosial, and the yielding smile;

Ambiguous looks, that scorn and yet relent;
Denials mild, and firm unalter'd truth;
Reluctant pride, and amorous faint consent,
And meeting ardours, and exulting youth.

Sleep, wayward god ! hath sworn, while these remain,

With flattering dreams to dry his nightly tear ;
And cheerful Hope, so oft invoked in vain,
With fairy songs shall soothe his pensive ear.

If, bound by vows to Friendship's gentle side,
And fond of soul, thou hopest an equal grace,
If youth or maid thy joys and griefs divide,
O, much entreated, leave this fatal place !

Sweet Peace, who long hath shunn'd my plaintive day,

Consents at length to bring me short delight :
Thy careless steps may scare her doves away,
And Grief with raven note usurp the night.

GOLDSMITH.

**THE
T R A V E L L E R,
AND
OTHER POEMS.**



GOLDSMITH
THE
TRAVELLER.



*Alike all ages. Dames of ancient days,
Have led their children through the mirthful maze.*



TO THE
REV. HENRY GOLDSMITH.

DEAR SIR,

I AM sensible that the friendship between us can acquire no new force from the ceremonies of a Dedication ; and perhaps it demands an excuse thus to prefix your name to my attempts, which you decline giving with your own. But as a part of this poem was formerly written to you from Switzerland, the whole can now, with propriety, be only inscribed to you. It will also throw a light upon many parts of it, when the reader understands that it is addressed to a man, who, despising fame and fortune, has retired early to happiness and obscurity, with an income of forty pounds a year.

I now perceive, my dear brother, the wisdom of your humble choice. You have entered upon a sacred office, where the harvest is great, and the labourers are but few ; while you have left the field of ambition, where the labourers are many, and the harvest not worth carrying away. But of all kinds of ambition, what from the refinement of the times, from different systems of criticism, and from

the divisions of party, that which pursues poetical fame is the wildest.

Poetry makes a principal amusement among unpolished nations ; but in a country verging to the extremes of refinement, Painting and Music come in for a share. As these offer the feeble mind a less laborious entertainment, they at first rival Poetry, and at length supplant her ; they engross all that favour once shown to her ; and, though but younger sisters, seize upon the elder's birth-right.

Yet, however this art may be neglected by the powerful, it is still in greater danger from the mistaken efforts of the learned to improve it. What criticisms have we not heard of late in favour of blank verse, and Pindaric odes, choruses, anapests, and iambics, illiterative care and happy negligence ! Every absurdity has now a champion to defend it ; and as he is generally much in the wrong, so he has always much to say ; for error is ever talkative.

But there is an enemy to this art still more dangerous—I mean Party. Party entirely distorts the judgment, and destroys the taste. When the mind is once infected with this disease, it can only find pleasure in what contributes to increase the distemper. Like the tiger, that seldom desists from pursuing man, after having once preyed upon human flesh ; the reader who has once gratified his appetite with calumny, makes ever after the most agreeable

feast upon murdered reputation. Such readers generally admire some half-witted thing, who wants to be thought a bold man, having lost the character of a wise one. Him they dignify with the name of poet : his tawdry lampoons are called satires ; his turbulence is said to be force, and his frenzy fire.

What reception a poem may find, which has neither abuse, party, nor blank verse, to support it, I cannot tell, nor am I solicitous to know. My aims are right. Without espousing the cause of any party, I have attempted to moderate the rage of all. I have endeavoured to show, that there may be equal happiness in states that are differently governed from our own ; that every state has a particular principle of happiness, and that this principle in each may be carried to a mischievous excess. There are few can judge better than yourself how far these positions are illustrated in this poem.

I am,

Dear sir,

Your most affectionate brother,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

1

1

THE
TRAVELLER.

REMOTE, unfriended, melaucholy, slow,
Or by the lazy Scheld, or wandering Po ;
Or onward, where the rude Carinthian boor
Against the houseless stranger shuts the door ;
Or where Campania's plain forsaken lies,
A weary waste expanding to the skies ;
Where'er I roam, whatever realms to see,
My heart, untravell'd, fondly turns to thee :
Still to my brother turns, with ceaseless pain,
And drags at each remove a lengthening chain.

Eternal blessings crown my earliest friend,
And round his dwelling guardian saints attend.
Blest be that spot, where cheerful guests retire
To pause from toil, and trim their evening fire ;
Blest that abode, where want and pain repair,
And every stranger finds a ready chair ;
Blest be those feasts with simple plenty crown'd,
Where all the ruddy family around
Laugh at the jests or pranks that never fail,
Or sigh with pity at some mournful tale ;
Or press the bashful stranger to his food,
And learn the luxury of doing good.

But me, not destined such delights to share,
My prime of life in wandering spent and care;
Impell'd with steps unceasing to pursue
Some fleeting good, that mocks me with the view;
That, like the circle bounding earth and skies,
Allures from far, yet, as I follow, flies;
My fortune leads to traverse realms alone,
And find no spot of all the world my own.

Ev'n now, where Alpine solitudes ascend,
I sit me down a pensive hour to spend;
And placed on high, above the storm's career,
Look downward where an hundred realms appear;
Lakes, forests, cities, plains extending wide,
The pomp of kings, the shepherd's humbler pride.

When thus creation's charms around combine,
Amidst the store, should thankless pride repine?
Say, should the philosophic mind disdain
That good which makes each humbler bosom vain?
Let school-taught pride dissemble all it can,
These little things are great to little man;
And wiser he, whose sympathetic mind
Exults in all the good of all mankind.
Ye glittering towns, with wealth and splendour
crown'd;

Ye fields, where summer spreads profusion round;
Ye lakes, whose vessels catch the busy gale;
Ye bending swains, that dress the flowery vale;
For me your tributary stores combine;
Creation's heir, the world, the world is mine.

As some lone miser, visiting his store,
Bends at his treasure, counts, recounts it o'er;
Hoard after hoard his rising raptures fill,
Yet still he sighs, for hoards are wanting still;

Thus to my breast alternate passions rise,
Pleased with each good that Heaven to man supplies :

Yet oft a sigh prevails, and sorrows fall,
To see the hoard of human bliss so small ;
And oft I wish, amidst the scene, to find
Some spot to real happiness consign'd,
Where my worn soul, each wandering hope at rest,
May gather bliss, to see my fellows blest.

But where to find that happiest spot below,
Who can direct, when all pretend to know ?
The shuddering tenant of the frigid zone
Boldly proclaims that happiest spot his own ;
Extols the treasures of his stormy seas,
And his long nights of revelry and ease :
The naked negro, panting at the line,
Boasts of his golden sands and palmy wine,
Basks in the glare, or stems the tepid wave,
And thanks his gods for all the good they gave.
Such is the patriot's boast, where'er we roam ;—
His first, best country ever is at home.
And yet, perhaps, if countries we compare,
And estimate the blessings which they share,
Though patriots flatter, still shall wisdom find
An equal portion dealt to all mankind ;
As different good, by art or nature given
To different nations, makes their blessings even.

Nature, a mother kind alike to all,
Still grants her bliss at labour's earnest call :
With food as well the peasant is supplied
On Idra's cliff as Arno's shelvy side ;
And though the rocky-crested summits frown,
These rocks, by custom, turn to beds of down.

From art more various are the blessings sent,
Wealth, commerce, honour, liberty, content ;
Yet these each other's power so strong contest,
That either seems destructive of the rest.
Where wealth and freedom reign, contentment
fails ;

And honour sinks where commerce long prevails .
Hence every state, to one loved blessing prone,
Conforms and models life to that alone :
Each to the favourite happiness attends,
And spurns the plan that aims at other ends ;
Till, carried to excess in each domain,
This favourite good begets peculiar pain.

But let us try these truths with closer eyes,
And trace them through the prospect as it lies.
Here for a while, my proper cares resign'd,
Here let me sit in sorrow for mankind ;
Like yon neglected shrub, at random cast,
That shades the steep, and sighs at every blast.

Far to the right, where Apennine ascends,
Bright as the summer, Italy extends :
Its uplands sloping deck the mountain's side,
Woods over woods in gay theatric pride ;
While oft some temple's mouldering tops between
With memorable grandeur mark the scene.

Could Nature's bounty satisfy the breast,
The sons of Italy were surely blest.
Whatever fruits in different climes are found,
That proudly rise, or humbly court the ground ;
Whatever blooms in torrid tracts appear,
Whose bright succession decks the varied year ;
Whatever sweets salute the northern sky
With vernal lives, that blossom but to die ;

These here disporting own the kindred soil,
Nor ask luxuriance from the planter's toil ;
While sea-born gales their gelid wings expand
To winnow fragrance round the smiling land.

But small the bliss that sense alone bestows,
And sensual bliss is all the nation knows.
In florid beauty groves and fields appear ;
Man seems the only growth that dwindles here.
Contrasted faults through all his manners reign :
Though poor, luxurious ; though submissive, vain ;
Though grave, yet trifling ; zealous, yet untrue ;
And ev'n in penance planning sins anew.
All evils here contaminate the mind,
That opulence departed leaves behind ;
For wealth was theirs, not far removed the date,
When commerce proudly flourish'd through the
state.

At her command the palace learnt to rise ;
Again the long-fall'n column sought the skies ;
The canvass glow'd, beyond ev'n Nature warm ;
The pregnant quarry teem'd with human form :
Till, more unsteady than the southern gale,
Commerce on other shores display'd her sail ;
While naught remain'd of all that riches gave,
But towns unmann'd, and lords without a slave :
And late the nation found, with fruitless skill,
Its former strength was but plethoric ill.

Yet, still the loss of wealth is here supplied
By arts, the splendid wrecks of former pride :
From these the feeble heart and long-fall'n mind
An easy compensation seem to find.
Here may be seen, in bloodless pomp array'd,
The pasteboard triumph and the cavalcade ;

Processions form'd for piety and love ;
A mistress or a saint in every grove.
By sports like these are all their cares beguiled ;
The sports of children satisfy the child.
Each nobler aim, repress'd by long control,
Now sinks at last, or feebly mans the soul ;
While low delights, succeeding fast behind,
In happier meanness occupy the mind :
As in those domes, where Cæsars once bore sway,
Defaced by time, and tottering in decay,
There in the ruin, heedless of the dead,
The shelter-seeking peasant builds his shed ;
And, wondering man could want the larger pile,
Exults, and owns his cottage with a smile.

My soul turn from them ; turn we to survey
Where rougher climes a nobler race display ;
Where the bleak Swiss their stormy mansions tread,
And force a churlish soil for scanty bread.
No product here the barren hills afford,
But man and steel—the soldier and his sword :
No vernal blooms their torpid rocks array,
But Winter lingering chills the lap of May ;
No zephyr fondly sues the mountain's breast,
But meteors glare, and stormy glooms invest.

Yet still, ev'n here, content can spread a charm,
Redress the clime, and all its rage disarm.
Though poor the peasant's hut, his feasts though
small,

He sees his little lot the lot of all ;
Sees no contiguous palace rear its head,
To shame the meanness of his humble shed ;
No costly lord the sumptuous banquet deal,
To make him loathe his vegetable meal ;

But calm, and bred in ignorance and toil,
Each wish contracting, fits him to the soil.
Cheerful at morn, he wakes from short repose,
Breathes the keen air, and carols as he goes :
With patient angle trolls the finny deep,
Or drives his venturous ploughshare to the steep ;
Or seeks the den where snow-tracks mark the
way,

And drags the struggling savage into day.
At night returning, every labour sped,
He sits him down the monarch of a shed ;
Smiles by his cheerful fire, and round surveys
His children's looks, that brighten at the blaze ;
While his loved partner, boastful of her hoard,
Displays her cleanly platter on the board ;
And haply too some pilgrim, thither led,
With many a tale repays the nightly bed.

Thus every good his native wilds impart
Imprints the patriot passion on his heart ;
And ev'n those hills that round his mansion rise,
Enhance the bliss his scanty fund supplies :
Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms,
And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms :
And as a child, when scaring sounds molest,
Clings close and closer to the mother's breast,
So the loud torrent, and the whirlwind's roar,
But bind him to his native mountains more.

Such are the charms to barren states assign'd ;
Their wants but few, their wishes all confined :
Yet let them only share the praises due ;
If few their wants, their pleasures are but few ;
For every want that stimulates the breast
Becomes a source of pleasure when redress'd :

Whence from such lands each pleasing science flies,
That first excites desire, and then supplies;
Unknown to them, when sensual pleasures cloy,
To fill the languid pause with finer joy;
Unknown those powers that raise the soul to flame,
Catch every nerve, and vibrate through the frame:
Their level life is but a mouldering fire,
Unquench'd by want, unfann'd by strong desire;
Unfit for raptures; or, if raptures cheer
On some high festival of once a year,
In wild excess the vulgar breast takes fire,
Till, buried in debauch, the bliss expire.

But not their joys alone thus coarsely flow;
Their morals, like their pleasures, are but low;
For, as refinement stops, from sire to son,
Unalter'd, unimproved, the manners run;
And love's and friendship's finely-pointed dart
Fall blunted from each indurated heart.
Some sterner virtues o'er the mountain's breast
May sit, like falcons cowering on the nest;
But all the gentler morals, such as play
Through life's more cultured walks, and charm the
way,—

These, far dispersed, on timorous pinions fly,
To sport and flutter in a kinder sky.

To kinder skies, where gentler manners reign,
I turn; and France displays her bright domain:
Gay, sprightly land of mirth and social ease,
Pleased with thyself, whom all the world can please;
How often have I led thy sportive choir,
With tuneless pipe, beside the murmuring Loire!
Where shading elms along the margin grew,
And freshen'd from the wave the zephyr flew:

And haply, though my harsh touch, faltering still,
But mock'd all tune, and marr'd the dancer's
skill ;

Yet would the village praise my wondrous power,
And dance, forgetful of the noontide hour.

Alike all ages. Dames of ancient days
Have led their children through the mirthful maze ;
And the gay grandsire, skill'd in gestic lore,
Has frisk'd beneath the burthen of threescore.
So blest a life these thoughtless realms display,
Thus idly busy rolls their world away :

Theirs are those arts that mind to 'mind endear ;

For honour forms the social temper here :

Honour, that praise which real merit gains,

Or ev'n imaginary worth obtains,

Here passes current : paid from hand to hand,

It shifts, in splendid traffic, round the land :

From courts to camps, to cottages it strays,

And all are taught an avarice of praise :

They please, are pleased ; they give, to get esteem ;

Till, seeming blest, they grow to what they seem.

But while this softer art their bliss supplies,

It gives their follies also room to rise :

For praise, too dearly loved, or warmly sought,

Enfeebles all internal strength of thought ;

And the weak soul, within itself unblest,

Leans for all pleasure on another's breast.

Hence Ostentation here, with tawdry art,

Pants for the vulgar praise which fools impart ;

Here Vanity assumes her pert grimace,

And trims her robes of frieze with copper lace ;

Here beggar Pride defrauds her daily cheer,

To boast one splendid banquet once a year :

The mind still turns where shifting fashion draws,
Nor weighs the solid worth of self-applause.

To men of other minds my fancy flies,
Embosom'd in the deep where Holland lies.
Methinks her patient sons before me stand,
Where the broad ocean leans against the land,
And, sedulous to stop the coming tide,
Lift the tall rampire's artificial pride.
Onward, methinks, and diligently slow,
The firm connected bulwark seems to grow ;
Spreads its long arms amidst the watery roar,
Scoops out an empire, and usurps the shore :
While the pent ocean, rising o'er the pile,
Sees an amphibious world beneath him smile :
The slow canal, the yellow-blossom'd vale,
The willow-tufted bank, the gliding sail,
The crowded mart, the cultivated plain,
A new creation rescued from his reign.

Thus, while around the wave-subjected soil
Impels the native to repeated toil,
Industrious habits in each bosom reign,
And industry begets a love of gain.
Hence all the good from opulence that springs,
With all those ills superfluous treasure brings,
Are here display'd. Their much-loved wealth im-
parts

Convenience, plenty, elegance, and arts ;
But view them closer, craft and fraud appear ;
Ev'n liberty itself is barter'd here.
At gold's superior charms all freedom flies,
The needy sell it, and the rich man buys ;
A land of tyrants, and a den of slaves,
Here wretches seek dishonourable graves,

And, calmly bent, to servitude conform,
Dull as their lakes that slumber in the storm.

Heavens ! how unlike their Belgic sires of old !
Rough, poor, content, ungovernably bold ;
War in each breast, and freedom on each brow :
How much unlike the sons of Britain now !

Fired at the sound, my genius spreads her wing,
And flies where Britain courts the western spring ;
Where lawns extend that scorn Arcadian pride,
And brighter streams than famed Hydaspes glide :
There all around the gentlest breezes stray,
There gentle music melts on every spray ;
Creation's mildest charms are there combined ;
Extremes are only in the master's mind :
Stern o'er each bosom Reason holds her state,
With daring aims irregularly great ;
Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
I see the lords of human kind pass by ;
Intent on high designs, a thoughtful band,
By forms unfashion'd, fresh from Nature's hand,
Fierce in their native hardness of soul,
True to imagined right, above control,
While ev'n the peasant boasts these rights to scan,
And learns to venerate himself as man.

Thine, Freedom, thine the blessings pictured
here ;
Thine are those charms that dazzle and endear :
Too blest indeed were such without alloy,
But, foster'd ev'n by Freedom, ills annoy
That independence Britons prize too high,
Keeps man from man, and breaks the social tie ;
The self-dependent lordlings stand alone,
All claims that bind and sweeten life unknown ;

Here, by the bonds of nature feebly held,
Minds combat minds, repelling and repell'd ;
Ferments arise, imprison'd factions roar,
Repress'd ambition struggles round her shore ;
'Till, over-wrought, the general system feels
Its motions stop, or frenzy fire the wheels.

Nor this the worst. As nature's ties decay,
As duty, love, and honour, fail to sway,
Fictitious bonds, the bonds of wealth and law,
Still gather strength, and force unwilling awe.
Hence all obedience bows to these alone,
And talent sinks, and merit weeps unknown ;
Till time may come, when, stripp'd of all her
 charms,

The land of scholars, and the nurse of arms,
Where noble stems transmit the patriot flame,
Where kings have toil'd, and poets wrote, for
 fame,

One sink of level avarice shall lie,
And scholars, soldiers, kings, unhonour'd die.

Yet think not, thus when Freedom's ills I state,
I mean to flatter kings, or court the great :
Ye powers of truth, that bid my soul aspire,
Far from my bosom drive the low desire !
And thou, fair Freedom, taught alike to feel
The rabble's rage, and tyrant's angry steel ;
Thou transitory flower, alike undone
By proud contempt, or favour's fostering sun ;
Still may thy blooms the changeful clime endure !
I only would repress them to secure ;
For just experience tells, in every soil,
That those who think must govern those that toil ;

And all that Freedom's highest aims can reach
Is but to lay proportion'd loads on each.
Hence, should one order disproportion'd grow,
Its double weight must ruin all below.

O then how blind to all that truth requires,
Who think it freedom when a part aspires !
Calm is my soul, nor apt to rise to arms,
Except when fast-approaching danger warms :
But when contending chiefs blockade the throne,
Contracting regal power to stretch their own ;
When I behold a factious band agree
To call it freedom when themselves are free ;
Each wanton judge new penal statutes draw,
Laws grind the poor, and rich men rule the law ;
The wealth of climes, where savage nations roam,
Pillaged from slaves, to purchase slaves at home ;
Fear, pity, justice, indignation, start,
Tear off reserve, and bare my swelling heart ;
Till half a patriot, half a coward grown,
I fly from petty tyrants to the throne.

Yes, brother, curse with me that baleful hour
When first ambition struck at regal power ;
And thus, polluting honour in its source,
Gave wealth to sway the mind with double force.
Have we not seen, round Britain's peopled shore,
Her useful sons exchanged for useless ore ?
Seen all her triumphs but destruction haste,
Like flaring tapers brightening as they waste ?
Seen Opulence, her grandeur to maintain,
Lead stern Depopulation in her train,
And over fields where scatter'd hamlets rose,
In barren, solitary pomp repose ?

Have we not seen, at Pleasure's lordly call,
The smiling long-frequented village fall ?
Beheld the duteous son, the sire decay'd,
The modest matron, and the blushing maid,
Forced from their homes, a melancholy train,
To traverse climes beyond the western main ;
Where wild Oswego spreads her swamps around,
And Niagara stuns with thundering sound ?

Ev'n now, perhaps, as there some pilgrim strays
Through tangled forests, and through dangerous
ways ;

Where beasts with man divided empire claim,
And the brown Indian marks with murderous
aim ;

There, while above the giddy tempest flies,
And all around distressful yells arise,
The pensive exile, bending with his woe,
To stop too fearful, and too faint to go,
Casts a long look where England's glories shine,
And bids his bosom sympathize with mine.

Vain, very vain, my weary search to find
That bliss which only centres in the mind.
Why have I stray'd from pleasure and repose,
'To seek a good each government bestows ?
In every government, though terrors reign,
Though tyrant kings or tyrant laws restrain,
How small, of all that human hearts endure,
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure !
Still to ourselves, in every place consign'd,
Our own felicity we make or find :
With secret course, which no loud storms annoy,
Glides the smooth current of domestic joy.

The lifted axe, the agonizing wheel,
Luke's iron crown, and Damien's bed of steel,¹
To men remote from power but rarely known,
Leave reason, faith, and conscience, all our own.

¹ In the *Respublica Hungarica* there is an account of a desperate rebellion in the year 1514, headed by two brothers, George and Luke Zeck. When it was quelled, *George*, not *Luke*, was punished by his head being encircled with a red-hot iron crown. Boswell pointed out Goldsmith's mistake.

THE
HAUNCH OF VENISON:

AN
EPISTLE TO LORD CLARE.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1765.

THANKS, my lord, for your venison, for finer or
fatter

Ne'er ranged in a forest, or smoked in a platter.
The haunch was a picture for painters to study,
The fat was so white, and the lean was so ruddy:
Though my stomach was sharp, I could scarce help
regretting

To spoil such a delicate picture by eating :
I had thoughts, in my chamber, to place it in view,
To be shown to my friends as a piece of vertu :
As in some Irish houses, where things are so so,
One gammon of bacon hangs up for a show ;
But, for eating a rasher of what they take pride in,
They'd as soon think of eating the pan it is fried in.
But hold—let me pause—don't I hear you pronounce
This tale of the bacon 's a damnable bounce.
Well, suppose it a bounce—sure a poet may try,
By a bounce now and then, to get courage to fly.

But, my lord, it's no bounce : I protest in my turn,

It's a truth—and your lordship may ask Mr. Burn'.
To go on with my tale—as I gazed on the haunch,
I thought of a friend that was trusty and staunch :
So I cut it, and sent it to Reynolds undrest,
To paint it, or eat it, just as he liked best :
Of the neck and the breast I had next to dispose ;
'Twas a neck and a breast that might rival Monroe's :
But in parting with these I was puzzled again,
With the how, and the who, and the where, and
the when.

There's H—d, and C—y, and H—rth, and H—ff,
I think they love venison—I know they love beef.
There's my countryman Higgins—O ! let him alone
For making a blunder, or picking a bone.
But hang it—to poets, who seldom can eat,
Your very good mutton's a very good treat ;
Such dainties to them, their health it might hurt ;
It's like sending them ruffles when wanting a shirt.
While thus I debated, in reverie centred,
An acquaintance, a friend as he call'd himself, enter'd ;

An underbred, fine-spoken fellow was he,
And he smiled as he look'd at the venison and me.
“ What have we got here ?—Why this is good eating !
Your own I suppose—or is it in waiting ? ”
“ Why whose should it be ? ”—cried I with a flounce ;
“ I get these things often ”—but that was a bounce :
“ Some lords, my acquaintance, that settle the
nation,
Are pleased to be kind—but I hate ostentation.”

† Lord Clare's nephew.

"If that be the case then," cried he, very gay,
"I'm glad I have taken this house in my way.
To-morrow you take a poor dinner with me;
No words—I insist on 't—precisely at three:
We'll have Johnson and Burke; all the wits will
be there;

My acquaintance is slight, or I'd ask my lord Clare.
And now, that I think on 't, as I am a sinner,
We wanted this venison to make out a dinner.
What say you?—a pasty—it shall, and it must,
And my wife, little Kitty, is famous for crust.
Here, porter—this venison with me to Mile-end;
No stirring, I beg—my dear friend—my dear friend!"
Thus snatching his hat, he brush'd off like the wind,
And the porter and eatables follow'd behind.

Left alone to reflect, having emptied my shelf,
And "nobody with me at sea but myself";
Though I could not help thinking my gentleman
hasty,

Yet Johnson, and Burke, and a good venison pasty,
Were things that I never disliked in my life,
Though clogg'd with a coxcomb, and Kitty his wife.
So next day, in due splendour to make my approach,
I drove to his door in my own hackney-coach.

When come to the place where we all were to
dine
(A chair-lumber'd closet, just twelve feet by nine),
My friend bade me welcome, but struck me quite
dumb
With tidings that Johnson and Burke would not
come;

¹ See the letters that passed between his Royal Highness
Henry Duke of Cumberland and Lady Grosvenor.



“ For I knew it,” he cried, “ both eternally fail,
The one with his speeches, and t’other with Thrale;
But no matter; I’ll warrant we’ll make up the party,
With two full as clever, and ten times as hearty:
The one is a Scotchman, the other a Jew;
They’re both of them merry, and authors like you:
The one writes the Snarler, the other the Scourge;
Some think he writes Cinna—he owns to Panurge.”
While thus he described them by trade and by name,
They enter’d, and dinner was served as they came.

At the top a fried liver and bacon was seen;
At the bottom was tripe, in a swinging tureen;
At the sides there were spinach and pudding made
hot;

In the middle a place were the pasty—was not.
Now, my lord, as for tripe, it’s my utter aversion,
And your bacon I hate like a Turk or a Persian;
So there I sat stuck like a horse in a pound,
While the bacon and liver went merrily round:
But what vex’d me most, was that d——’d Scottish
rogue,

With his long-winded speeches, his smiles, and his
brogue:

And, “ Madam,” quoth he, “ may this bit be my
poison,

A prettier dinner I never set eyes on:

Pray a slice of your liver; though may I be curst,
But I’ve eat of your tripe till I’m ready to burst.”

“ The tripe!” quoth the Jew, with his chocolate
cheek:

“ I could dine on this tripe seven days in a week:
I like these here dinners, so pretty and small;
But your friend there, the doctor, eats nothing at
all.”

“ O—ho!” quoth my friend, “ he’ll come on in a trice,

He’s keeping a corner for something that’s nice :
There’s a pasty.”—“ A pasty!” repeated the Jew ;
“ I don’t care if I keep a corner for ’t too.”—

“ What the de’il, mon, a pasty?” re-echoed the Scot ;

“ Though splitting, I’ll still keep a corner for that.”—

“ We’ll all keep a corner,” the lady cried out ;

“ We’ll all keep a corner,” was echoed about.

While thus we resolved, and the pasty delay’d,
With looks that quite petrified, enter’d the maid ;

A visage so sad, and so pale with affright,

Waked Priam, in drawing his curtains by night :

But we quickly found out (for who could mistake her ?)

That she came with some terrible news from the baker.

And so it fell out, for that negligent sloven

Had shut out the pasty on shutting his oven.

Sad Philomel thus—but let similes drop—

And now that I think on’t the story may stop.

To be plain, my good lord, it’s but labour misplaced

To send such good verses to one of your taste :

You’ve got an odd something—a kind of discerning—

A relish—a taste—sicken’d over by learning :

At least, it’s your temper, as very well known,

That you think very slightly of all that’s your own ;

So, perhaps, in your habits of thinking amiss,


You may make a mistake, and think slightly of this.

THE
DOUBLE TRANSFORMATION:
A TALE.

SECLUDED from domestic strife,
Jack Book-worm led a college life :
A fellowship at twenty-five
Made him the happiest man alive ;
He drank his glass, and crack'd his joke,
And freshmen wonder'd as he spoke.

Such pleasures, unalloy'd with care,
Could any accident impair ?
Could Cupid's shaft at length transfix
Our swain, arrived at thirty-six ?
O had the archer ne'er come down
To ravage in a country town ;
Or Flavia been content to stop
At triumphs in a Fleet-street shop !
O had her eyes forgot to blaze,
Or Jack had wanted eyes to gaze !
O !——But let exclamation cease ;
Her presence banish'd all his peace :
So, with decorum all things carried,
Miss frown'd, and blush'd, and then was—married.

Need we expose to vulgar sight
The raptures of the bridal night ?



Need we intrude on hallow'd ground,
Or draw the curtains closed around ?
Let it suffice, that each had charms :
He clasp'd a goddess in his arms ;
And though she felt his usage rough,
Yet in a man 'twas well enough.

The honeymoon like lightning flew ;
The second brought its transports too :
A third, a fourth, were not amiss ;
The fifth was friendship mix'd with bliss :
But when a twelvemonth pass'd away,
Jack found his goddess made of clay—
Found half the charms that deck'd her face
Arose from powder, shreds, or lace :
But still the worst remain'd behind—
That very face had robb'd her mind.

Skill'd in no other arts was she
But dressing, patching, repartee ;
And, just as humour rose or fell,
By turns a slattern or a belle :
'Tis true she dress'd, with modern grace,
Half-naked at a ball or race ;
But when at home, at board or bed,
Five greasy night-caps wrapp'd her head.
Could so much beauty condescend
To be a dull domestic friend ?
Could any curtain-lectures bring
To decency so fine a thing ?
In short, by night, 'twas fits or fretting ;
By day, 'twas gadding or coquetting.
Fond to be seen, she kept a bevy
Of powder'd coxcombs at her levee :
The squire and captain took their stations,
And twenty other near relations.



Jack suck'd his pipe, and often broke
A sigh in suffocating smoke ;
While all their hours were pass'd between
Insulting repartee or spleen.

Thus, as her faults each day were known,
He thinks her features coarser grown :
He fancies every vice she shows,
Or thins her lip, or points her nose :
Whenever rage or envy rise,
How wide her mouth, how wild her eyes !
He knows not how, but so it is,
Her face is grown a knowing phiz ;
And though her fops are wondrous civil,
He thinks her ugly as the devil.

Now, to perplex the ravell'd noose,
As each a different way pursues,
While sullen or loquacious strife
Promised to hold them on for life ;—
That dire disease, whose ruthless power
Withers the beauty's transient flower,
Lo ! the small-pox, whose horrid glare
Levell'd its terrors at the fair ;
And, rifling every youthful grace,
Left but the remnant of a face.

The glass, grown hateful to her sight,
Reflected now a perfect fright .
Each former art she vainly tries
To bring back lustre to her eyes.
In vain she tries her paste and creams,
To smoothe her skin, or hide its seams :
Her country beaux and city cousins,
Lovers no more, flew off by dozens ;
The squire himself was seen to yield,
And ev'n the captain quit the field.

Poor madam, now condemn'd to hack
The rest of life with anxious Jack,
Perceiving others fairly flown,
Attempted pleasing him alone.
Jack soon was dazzled to behold
Her present face surpass the old :
With modesty her cheeks were dyed—
Humility displaces pride ;
For tawdry finery is seen
A person ever neatly clean :
No more presuming on her sway,
She learns good-nature every day.
Serenely gay, and strict in duty,
Jack finds his wife a perfect beauty.

THE
LOGICIANS REFUTED.

IN IMITATION OF DEAN SWIFT.

LOGICIANS have but ill defined
As rational the human mind :
Reason, they say, belongs to man,
But let them prove it if they can.
Wise Aristotle and Smiglesius,
By ratiocinations specious,
Have strove to prove with great precision,
With definition and division,
' Homo est ratione præditum :'
But for my soul I cannot credit 'em ;
And must, in spite of them, maintain
That man and all his ways are vain ;
And that this boasted lord of nature
Is both a weak and erring creature ;
This instinct is a surer guide
Than reason, boasting mortals' pride ;
And that brute beasts are far before 'em :
' Deus est anima brutorum.'
Who ever knew an honest brute
At law his neighbour prosecute,
Bring action for assault and battery,
Or friend beguile with lies and flattery ?
O'er plains they ramble unconfined ;
No politics disturb their mind ;

They eat their meals, and take their sport,
Nor know who's in or out at court ;
They never to the levee go,
To treat as dearest friend a foe ;
They never importune his Grace,
Nor ever cringe to men in place ;
Nor undertake a dirty job,
Nor draw the quill to write for Bob :
Fraught with invective, they ne'er go
To folks at Paternoster-row :
No judges, fiddlers, dancing masters,
No pickpockets or poetasters,
Are known to honest quadrupeds ;
No single brute his fellows leads :
Brutes never meet in bloody fray,
Nor cut each other's throats for pay.
Of beasts, it is confess'd, the ape
Comes nearest us in human shape :
Like man, he imitates each fashion,
And malice is his ruling passion :
But, both in malice and grimaces,
A courtier any ape surpasses.
Behold him, humbly cringing, wait
Upon the minister of state :
View him soon after to inferiors
Aping the conduct of superiors :
He promises with equal air,
And to perform takes equal care.
He in his turn finds imitators .
At court, the porters, lackeys, waiters,
Their masters' manners still contract,
And footmen lords and dukes can act.
Thus, at the court, both great and small
Behave alike—for all ape all.

A
NEW SIMILE.

IN THE MANNER OF SWIFT.

LONG had I sought in vain to find
A likeness for the scribbling kind ;
The modern scribbling kind, who write
In wit, and sense, and nature's spite :
Till reading, I forget what day on,
A chapter out of Tooke's Pantheon,
I think I met with something there
To suit my purpose to a hair.

But let us not proceed too furious—
First please to turn to god Mercurius :
You'll find him pictured at full length
In book the second, page the tenth.
The stress of all my proofs on him I lay ;
And now proceed we to our simile.

Imprimis, pray observe his hat ;
Wings upon either side—mark that.
Well ! what is it from thence we gather ?
Why these denote a brain of feather.
A brain of feather ! very right,
With wit that's flighty, learning light ;
Such as to modern bards decreed :
A just comparison—proceed.

In the next place, his feet peruse,
Wings grow again from both his shoes ;
Design'd, no doubt, their part to bear,
And waft his godship through the air.
And here my simile unites :
For, in a modern poet's flights,
I'm sure it may be justly said
His feet are useful as his head.

Lastly, vouchsafe to observe his hand,
Fill'd with a snake-encircled wand,
By classic authors term'd caduceus,
And highly famed for several uses :
To wit—most wondrously endued,
No poppy-water half so good ;
For let folks only get a touch,
Its soporific virtue 's such,
Though ne'er so much awake before,
That quickly they begin to snore.
Add too, what certain writers tell,
With this he drives men's souls to hell.

Now to apply begin we then :
His wand 's a modern author's pen ;
The serpents round about it twined
Denote him of the reptile kind ;
Denote the rage with which he writes ;
His frothy slaver, venom'd bites ;
An equal semblance still to keep,
Alike too both conduce to sleep.
This difference only—as the god
Drove souls to Tartarus with his rod,
With his goose-quill the scribbling elf,
Instead of others, damns himself.

And here my simile almost tripp'd :
Yet grant a word by way of postscript.

Moreover, Mercury had a failing :
Well ! what of that ? out with it—stealing ;
In which all modern bards agree,
Being each as great a thief as he.
But ev'n this deity's existence
Shall lend my simile assistance :
Our modern bards ! why what a p—x
Are they but senseless stones and blocks ?

DESCRIPTION OF AN AUTHOR'S BED-CHAMBER.

WHERE the Red Lion, staring o'er the way,
Invites each passing stranger that can pay;
Where Calvert's butt, and Parsons' black champagne,

Regale the drabs and bloods of Drury-lane;
There in a lonely room, from bailiffs snug,
'The Muse found Scroggen stretch'd beneath a rug.
A window, patch'd with paper, lent a ray,
That dimly show'd the state in which he lay;
The sanded floor, that grits beneath the tread;
The humid wall with paltry pictures spread;
The royal game of goose was there in view,
And the twelve rules the royal martyr drew;
The Seasons, framed with listing, found a place,
And brave Prince William show'd his lamp-black face.

The morn was cold; he views with keen desire
The rusty grate, unconscious of a fire:
With beer and milk arrears the frieze was scored,
And five crack'd tea-cups dress'd the chimney-board;

A night-cap deck'd his brows instead of bay,
A cap by night—a stocking all the day!

GOLDSMITH.

**THE
DESERTED VILLAGE,
AND
OTHER POEMS.**



GOLDSMITH.
THE
DESERTED VILLAGE.



The long remembered beggar was his guest,
 Whose beard descending swept his aged breast.

R. Frost. P. A. 1824.

W. Greenback. 6

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TO
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

DEAR SIR,

I CAN have no expectations in an address of this kind either to add to your reputation or to establish my own. You can gain nothing from my admiration, as I am ignorant of that art in which you are said to excel; and I may lose much by the severity of your judgment, as few have a juster taste in poetry than you. Setting interest therefore aside, to which I never paid much attention, I must be indulged at present in following my affections. The only dedication I ever made was to my brother, because I loved him better than most other men. He is since dead. Permit me to inscribe this poem to you.

How far you may be pleased with the versification and mere mechanical parts of this attempt, I do not pretend to inquire; but I know you will object (and indeed several of our best and wisest friends concur in the opinion) that the depopulation it deplores is no where to be seen, and the disorders it laments are only to be found in the poet's own imagination. To this I can scarce make any other answer, than that I sincerely believe what I have written; that I have taken all possible pains in my country excursions, for these four or five years past, to be certain of what I

allege; and that all my views and inquiries have led me to believe those miseries real which I here attempt to display. But this is not the place to enter into an inquiry whether the country be depopulating or not; the discussion would take up much room, and I should prove myself, at best, an indifferent politician, to tire the reader with a long preface, when I want his unfatigued attention to a long poem.

In regretting the depopulation of the country, I inveigh against the increase of our luxuries; and here also I expect the shout of modern politicians against me. For twenty or thirty years past it has been the fashion to consider luxury as one of the greatest national advantages; and all the wisdom of antiquity, in that particular, as erroneous. Still, however, I must remain a professed ancient on that head, and continue to think those luxuries prejudicial to states by which so many vices are introduced, and so many kingdoms have been undone. Indeed, so much has been poured out of late on the other side of the question, that, merely for the sake of novelty and variety, one would sometimes wish to be in the right.

I am,

Dear sir,

Your sincere friend,

and ardent admirer,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

THE
DESERTED VILLAGE.

SWEET Auburn ! loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty cheer'd the labouring
 swain,
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
And parting summer's lingering blooms delay'd :
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please :
How often have I loiter'd o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endear'd each scene !
How often have I paused on every charm,
The shelter'd cot, the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topt the neighbouring hill,
The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and whispering lovers made !
How often have I bless'd the coming day,
When toil remitting lent its turn to play,
And all the village train, from labour free,
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree ;
While many a pastime circled in the shade,
The young contending as the old survey'd ;

And many a gambol frolick'd o'er the ground,
And slights of art and feats of strength went round ;
And still, as each repeated pleasure tired,
Succeeding sports the mirthful band inspired :
The dancing pair that simply sought renown,
By holding out to tire each other down ;
The swain mistrustless of his smutt'd face,
While secret laughter titter'd round the place ;
The bashful virgin's sidelong looks of love,
The matron's glance that would those looks reprove :
These were thy charms, sweet village ! sports like
these,
With sweet succession, taught e'en toil to please ;
These round thy bowers their cheerful influence
shed,
These were thy charms—but all these charms are
fled.

Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn,
Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms withdrawn ;
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,
And desolation saddens all thy green :
One only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain :
No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,
But choked with sedges works its weedy way ;
Along thy glades, a solitary guest,
The hollow-sounding bittern guards its nest ;
Amidst thy desert walks the lapwing flies,
And tires their echoes with unvaried cries.
Sunk are thy bowers in shapeless ruin all,
And the long grass o'ertops the mouldering wall ;
And, trembling, shrinking from the spoiler's hand,
Far, far away, thy children leave the land.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay :
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade ;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made :
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroy'd, can never be supplied.

A time there was, ere England's griefs began,
When every rood of ground maintain'd its man ;
For him light labour spread her wholesome store,
Just gave what life required, but gave no more :
His best companions, innocence and health ;
And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.

But times are alter'd ; trade's unfeeling train
Usurp the land, and dispossess the swain ;
Along the lawn, where scatter'd hamlets rose,
Unwieldy wealth and cumbrous pomp repose ;
And every want to luxury allied,
And every pang that folly pays to pride.
Those gentle hours that plenty bade to bloom,
Those calm desires that ask'd but little room,
Those healthful sports that graced the peaceful
scene,

Lived in each look, and brighten'd all the green ;
These, far departing, seek a kinder shore,
And rural mirth and manners are no more.

Sweet Auburn ! parent of the blissful hour,
Thy glades forlorn confess the tyrant's power.
Here, as I take my solitary rounds
Amidst thy tangling walks and ruin'd grounds,
And, many a year elapsed, return to view
Where once the cottage stood, the hawthorn grew,
Remembrance wakes with all her busy train,
Swells at my breast, and turns the past to pain.

In all my wanderings round this world of care,
In all my griefs—and God has given my share—
I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down ;
To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting by repose :
I still had hopes, (for pride attends us still)
Amidst the swains to show my book-learn'd skill,
Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt, and all I saw ;
And, as a hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,
Pants to the place from whence at first she flew,
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return—and die at home at last.

O blest Retirement, friend to life's decline,
Retreats from care, that never must be mine,
How blest is he who crowns, in shades like these,
A youth of labour with an age of ease ;
Who quits a world where strong temptations try,
And, since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly !
For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
Explore the mine, or tempt the dangerous deep ;
No surly porter stands, in guilty state,
To spurn imploring famine from the gate ;
But on he moves to meet his latter end,
Angels around befriending virtue's friend ;
Sinks to the grave with unperceived decay,
While resignation gently slopes the way ;
And, all his prospects brightening to the last,
His heaven commences ere the world be past.

Sweet was the sound, when oft, at evening's
close,
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose .



There, as I pass'd with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came soften'd from below ;
The swain responsive as the milk-maid sung
To sober herd that low'd to meet their young ;
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
The playful children just let loose from school ;
The watch-dog's voice that bay'd the whispering
wind,

And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind ;
These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
And fill'd each pause the nightingale had made.

But now the sounds of population fail :

No cheerful murmurs fluctuate in the gale,
No busy steps the grass-grown footway tread,
But all the blooming flush of life is fled ;

All but yon widow'd, solitary thing,

That feebly bends beside the plashy spring :

She, wretched matron, forced in age, for bread,
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,

To pick her wintry faggot from the thorn,

To seek her nightly shed, and weep till morn ;

She only left of all the harmless train,

The sad historian of the pensive plain.

Near yonder copse, where once the garden
smiled,

And still where many a garden flower grows wild,

There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,

The village preacher's modest mansion rose.

A man he was to all the country dear,

And passing rich with forty pounds a year ;

Remote from towns he ran his godly race,

Nor e'er had changed, nor wish'd to change his
place :

Unskilful he to fawn, or seek for power,
By doctrines fashion'd to the varying hour ;
Far other aims his heart had learn'd to prize,
More bent to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train ;
He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain :
The long-remember'd beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast ;
The ruin'd spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claim'd kindred there, and had his claims allow'd ;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by his fire, and talk'd the night away ;
Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,
Shoulder'd his crutch, and show'd how fields were
won.

Pleased with his guests, the good man learn'd to
glow,

And quite forgot their vices in their woe ;
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And e'en his failings lean'd to virtue's side ;
But in his duty prompt, at every call,
He watch'd and wept, he pray'd and felt, for
all :

And, as a bird each fond endearment tries
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismay'd,
The reverend champion stood. At his control,
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul ;

Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last faltering accents whisper'd praise.

At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorn'd the venerable place ;
Truth from his lips prevail'd with double sway,
And fools, who came to scoff, remain'd to pray.
The service past, around the pious man,
With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran :
E'en children follow'd, with endearing wile,
And pluck'd his gown, to share the good man's
smile.

His ready smile a parent's warmth express'd,
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distress'd :
To them his heart, his love, his griefs, were given ;
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.
As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the
storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are
spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way
With blossom'd furze, unprofitably gay,
There, in his noisy mansion, skill'd to rule,
The village master taught his little school :
A man severe he was, and stern to view ;
I knew him well, and every truant knew :
Well had the boding tremblers learn'd to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face ;
Full well they laugh'd with counterfeited glee
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he ;
Full well the busy whisper, circling round,
Convey'd the dismal tidings when he frown'd ;

Yet he was kind, or if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault :
The village all declared how much he knew ;
'Twas certain he could write and cipher too :
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
And e'en the story ran that he could gauge :
In arguing, too, the parson own'd his skill,
For e'en though vanquish'd he could argue still ;
While words of learned length, and thundering
 sound,

Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around ;
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew
That one small head should carry all he knew.
But past is all his fame. The very spot,
Where many a time he triumph'd, is forgot.

Near yonder thorn that lifts its head on high,
Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye,
Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts in-
 spired,

Where grey-beard mirth and smiling toil retired,
Where village statesmen talk'd with looks pro-
 found,

And news much older than their ale went round.
Imagination fondly stoops to trace

The parlour splendours of that festive place ;
The white-wash'd wall, the nicely-sanded floor,
The varnish'd clock that click'd behind the door ;
The chest contrived a double debt to pay,
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day ;
The pictures placed for ornament and use,
The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose ;
The hearth, except when winter chill'd the day,
With aspen boughs, and flowers, and fennel, gay ;

While broken tea-cups, wisely kept for show,
Ranged o'er the chimney, glisten'd in a row.

Vain, transitory splendours ! could not all
Reprieve the tottering mansion from its fall ?
Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart
An hour's importance to the poor man's heart :
Thither no more the peasant shall repair
To sweet oblivion of his daily care :
No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,
No more the woodman's ballad shall prevail ;
No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,
Relax his ponderous strength, and lean to hear ;
The host himself no longer shall be found
Careful to see the mantling bliss go round ;
Nor the coy maid, half willing to be prest,
Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.

Yes ! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
These simple blessings of the lowly train :
'To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art ;
Spontaneous joys, where Nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway ;
Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
Unenvied, unmolested, unconfined.
But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
With all the freaks of wanton wealth array'd,
In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain ;
And, e'en while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart distrusting asks, if this be joy ?

Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen, who survey
The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay,

'Tis yours to judge how wide the limits stand
Between a splendid and a happy land.
Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,
And shouting Folly hails them from her shore ;
Hoards e'en beyond the miser's wish abound,
And rich men flock from all the world around.
Yet count our gains. This wealth is but a name
That leaves our useful products still the same.
Not so the loss. The man of wealth and pride
Takes up a space that many poor supplied ;
Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds ;
The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth
Has robb'd the neighbouring fields of half their
growth ;

His seat, where solitary sports are seen,
Indignant spurns the cottage from the green ;
Around the world each needful product flies,
For all the luxuries the world supplies :
While thus the land, adorn'd for pleasure all,
In barren splendour feebly waits the fall.

As some fair female, unadorn'd and plain,
Secure to please while youth confirms her reign,
Slight every borrow'd charm that dress supplies,
Nor shares with art the triumph of her eyes ;
But when those charms are past, (for charms are
frail)

When time advances, and when lovers fail,
She then shines forth, solicitous to bless,
In all the glaring impotence of dress :
Thus fares the land, by luxury betray'd :
In nature's simplest charms at first array'd ;

But verging to decline, its splendours rise,
Its vistas strike, its palaces surprise ;
While, scourged by famine, from the smiling land
The mournful peasant leads his humble band ;
And while he sinks, without one arm to save,
The country blooms—a garden and a grave.

Where then, ah ! where shall poverty reside,
To 'scape the pressure of contiguous pride ?
If to some common's fenceless limits stray'd,
He drives his flock to pick the scanty blade,
Those fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide,
And e'en the bare-worn common is denied.

If to the city sped—What waits him there ?
To see profusion that he must not share ;
To see ten thousand baneful arts combined
To pamper luxury, and thin mankind ;
To see each joy the sons of pleasure know
Extorted from his fellow-creature's woe.
Here, while the courtier glitters in brocade,
There the pale artist plies the sickly trade ;
Here, while the proud their long-drawn pomp display,
There the black gibbet glooms beside the way ;
The dome where pleasure holds her midnight reign,
Here, richly deck'd, admits the gorgeous train ;
Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare.
Sure scenes like these no troubles e'er annoy !
Sure these denote one universal joy !
Are these thy serious thoughts ?—Ah, turn thine
eyes

Where the poor houseless shivering female lies :

She once, perhaps, in village plenty blest,
Has wept at tales of innocence distress ;
Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,
Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn :
Now lost to all ; her friends, her virtue fled,
Near her betrayer's door she lays her head,
And, pinch'd with cold, and shrinking from the
shower,

With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour,
When idly first, ambitious of the town,
She left her wheel and robes of country brown.

Do thine, 'sweet Auburn, thine, the loveliest
train,

Do thy fair tribes participate her pain ?

E'en now, perhaps, by cold and hunger led,
At proud men's doors they ask a little bread !

Ah, no. To distant climes, a dreary scene,
Where half the convex world intrudes between,
Through torrid tracts with fainting steps they go,
Where wild Altama murmurs to their woe.
Far different there from all that charm'd before,
The various terrors of that horrid shore ;
Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray,
And fiercely shed intolerable day ;
Those matted woods where birds forget to sing,
But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling ;
Those poisonous fields with rank luxuriance crown'd,
Where the dark scorpion gathers death around ;
Where at each step the stranger fears to wake
The rattling terrors of the vengeful snake ;
Where crouching tigers wait their hapless prey,
And savage men more murderous still than they ;

While oft in whirls the mad tornado flies,
Mingling the ravaged landscape with the skies.
Far different these from every former scene ;
The cooling brook, the grassy-vested green,
The breezy covert of the warbling grove,
That only shelter'd thefts of harmless love.

Good Heaven ! what sorrows gloom'd that part-
ing day,
That call'd them from their native walks away !
When the poor exiles, every pleasure past,
Hung round the bowers, and fondly look'd their
last,
And took a long farewell, and wish'd in vain
For seats like these beyond the western main ;
And, shuddering still to face the distant deep,
Return'd and wept, and still return'd to weep.
The good old sire the first prepared to go
To new-found worlds, and wept for others' woe ;
But for himself, in conscious virtue brave,
He only wish'd for worlds beyond the grave.
His lovely daughter, lovelier in her tears,
The fond companion of his helpless years,
Silent went next, neglectful of her charms,
And left a lover's for her father's arms.
With louder plaints the mother spoke her woes,
And bless'd the cot where every pleasure rose ;
And kiss'd her thoughtless babes, with many a
tear,
And clasp'd them close, in sorrow doubly dear ;
Whilst her fond husband strove to lend relief
In all the silent manliness of grief.

O Luxury ! thou cursed by Heaven's decree,
How ill exchanged are things like these for thee !

How do thy potions, with insidious joy,
Diffuse their pleasures only to destroy!
Kingdoms by thee, to sickly greatness grown,
Boast of a florid vigour not their own :
At every draught more large and large they grow,
A bloated mass of rank unwieldy woe ;
Till, sapp'd their strength, and every part unsound,
Down, down they sink, and spread a ruin round.

E'en now the devastation is begun,
And half the business of destruction done ;
E'en now, methinks, as pondering here I stand,
I see the Rural Virtues leave the land.
Down where yon anchoring vessel spreads the sail,
That idly waiting flaps with every gale,
Downward they move, a melancholy band,
Pass from the shore, and darken all the strand.
Contented Toil, and hospitable Care,
And kind Connubial Tenderness, are there ;
And Piety with wishes placed above,
And steady Loyalty, and faithful Love.
And thou, sweet Poetry, thou loveliest maid,
Still first to fly where sensual joys invade ,
Unfit, in these degenerate times of shame,
To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame ;
Dear charming nymph, neglected and decried,
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride ;
Thou source of all my bliss, and all my woe,
That found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me
so ;

Thou guide, by which the nobler arts excel,
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well ;
Farewell ! and O ! where'er thy voice be tried,
On Torno's cliffs, or Pambamarca's side,

Whether where equinoctial fervours glow,
Or winter wraps the polar world in snow,
Still let thy voice, prevailing over time,
Redress the rigours of the inclement clime.
Aid, slighted Truth, with thy persuasive train ;
Teach erring man to spurn the rage of gain ;
Teach him, that states of native strength possess'd,
Though very poor, may still be very bless'd ;
That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,
As ocean sweeps the labour'd mole away ;
While self-dependent power can time defy,
As rocks resist the billows and the sky.

RETALIATION.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1774, AFTER
THE AUTHOR'S DEATH.

Dr. Goldsmith and some of his friends occasionally dined at the St. James's Coffee-house.—One day it was proposed to write epitaphs on him. His country, dialect, and person furnished subjects of witticism. He was called on for retaliation, and at their next meeting produced the following poem.

Of old, when Scarron his companions invited,
Each guest brought his dish, and the feast was united.
If our landlord¹ supplies us with beef and with fish,
Let each guest bring himself, and he brings the best
dish:
Our dean² shall be ven'son, just fresh from the
plains,
Our Burke³ shall be tongue, with the garnish of
brains,
Our Will⁴ shall be wild fowl, of excellent flavour,
And Dick⁵ with his pepper shall heighten the savour:

¹ The master of the St. James's Coffee-house, where the Doctor, and the friends he has characterised in this poem, occasionally dined.

² Dr. Bernard, dean of Derry, in Ireland.

³ Edmund Burke.

⁴ Mr. William Burke, late secretary to General Conway, and member for Bedwin.

⁵ Mr. Richard Burke, collector of Grenada.

Our Cumberland's ¹ sweet-bread its place shall obtain,

And Douglas ² is pudding, substantial and plain :

Our Garrick's ³ a salad ; for in him we see

Oil, vinegar, sugar, and saltiness agree :

To make out the dinner, full certain I am

That Ridge ⁴ is anchovy, and Reynolds ⁵ is lamb ;

That Hickey's ⁶ a capon ; and, by the same rule,

Magnanimous Goldsmith a gooseberry fool.

At a dinner so various, at such a repast,

Who'd not be a glutton, and stick to the last ?

Here, waiter, more wine, let me sit while I'm able,

Till all my companions sink under the table ;

Then, with chaos and blunders encircling my head,

Let me ponder, and tell what I think of the dead.

Here lies the good dean, re-united to earth,

Who mix'd reason with pleasure, and wisdom with mirth :

If he had any faults, he has left us in doubt,

At least, in six weeks I could not find them out ;

Yet some have declared, and it can't be denied 'em,

That Slyboots was cursedly cunning to hide 'em.

Here lies our good Edmund, whose genius was such,

We scarcely can praise it, or blame it too much ;

¹ Richard Cumberland, author of the *West Indian*, *Fashionable Lover*, *The Brothers*, and other dramatic pieces.

² Dr. Douglas, canon of Windsor (late bishop of Salisbury), an ingenious Scotch gentleman, who has no less distinguished himself as a citizen of the world, than a sound critic, in detecting several literary mistakes (or rather forgeries) of his countrymen ; particularly Lauder on Milton, and Bower's *History of the Popes*.

³ David Garrick.

⁴ Counsellor John Ridge, a gentleman belonging to the Irish bar.

⁵ Sir Joshua Reynolds.

⁶ An eminent attorney.

Who, born for the universe, narrow'd his mind,
 And to party gave up what was meant for mankind:
 Though fraught with all learning, yet straining his
 throat,

To persuade Tommy Townshend¹ to lend him a
 vote ;

Who, too deep for his hearers, still went on refining,
 And thought of convincing, while they thought of
 dining :

Though equal to all things, for all things unfit :
 Too nice for a statesman ; too proud for a wit ;
 For a patriot too cool ; for a drudge disobedient ;
 And too fond of the right to pursue the expedient.
 In short, 'twas his fate, unemploy'd, or in place, sir,
 To eat mutton cold, and cut blocks with a razor.

Here lies honest William, whose heart was a mint,
 While the owner ne'er knew half the good that was
 in 't :

The pupil of impulse, it forced him along,
 His conduct still right, with his argument wrong ;
 Still aiming at honour, yet fearing to roam,
 The coachman was tipsy, the chariot drove home.
 Would you ask for his merits ? alas ! he had none ;
 What was good was spontaneous, his faults were
 his own.

Here lies honest Richard², whose fate I must sigh
 at.

Alas ! that such frolic should now be so quiet !

¹ Mr. Townshend, member for Whitechurch.

² Mr. Richard Burke. This gentleman having slightly fractured one of his arms and legs, at different times, the Doctor has rallied him on those accidents, as a kind of retributive justice for breaking his jests upon other people.

What spirits were his ! what wit and what whim !
Now breaking a jest, and now breaking a limb !
Now wrangling and grumbling to keep up the ball !
Now teasing and vexing, yet laughing at all !
In short, so provoking a devil was Dick,
'That we wish'd him full ten times a day at Old Nick ;
But, missing his mirth and agreeable vein,
As often we wish'd to have Dick back again.

Here Cumberland lies, having acted his parts,
The Terence of England, the mender of hearts .
A flattering painter, who made it his care
To draw men as they ought to be, not as they are.
His gallants are all faultless, his women divine,
And comedy wonders at being so fine :
Like a tragedy-queen he has dizen'd her out,
Or rather like tragedy giving a rout.
His fools have their follies so lost in a crowd
Of virtues and feelings, that folly grows proud ;
And coxcombs, alike in their failings alone,
Adopting his portraits, are pleased with their own.
Say, where has our poet this malady caught ?
Or wherefore his characters thus without fault ?
Say, was it, that vainly directing his view
To find out men's virtues, and finding them few,
Quite sick of pursuing each troublesome elf,
He grew lazy at last, and drew from himself ?

Here Douglas retires from his toils to relax,
The scourge of impostors, the terror of quacks :
Come, all ye quack bards, and ye quacking divines,
Come, and dance on the spot where your tyrant
reclines :

When satire and censure encircled his throne,
I fear'd for your safety, I fear'd for my own ;

But now he is gone, and we want a detector,
 Our Dodds¹ shall be pious, our Kenricks² shall
 lecture ;
 Macpherson³ write bombast, and call it a style ;
 Our Townshend make speeches, and I shall com-
 pile ;
 New Lauders and Bowers the Tweed shall cross
 over,
 No countryman living their tricks to discover ;
 Detection her taper shall quench to a spark,
 And Scotchman meet Scotchman, and cheat in the
 dark.

Here lies David Garrick ; describe him who can :
 An abridgment of all that was pleasant in man :
 As an actor, confess'd without rival to shine ;
 As a wit, if not first, in the very first line :
 Yet, with talents like these, and an excellent heart,
 The man had his failings—a dupe to his art.
 Like an ill-judging beauty, his colours he spread,
 And be-plastered with rouge his own natural red.
 On the stage he was natural, simple, affecting ;
 'Twas only that when he was off he was acting.
 With no reason on earth to go out of his way,
 He turn'd and he varied full ten times a day :
 Though secure of our hearts, yet confoundedly sick
 If they were not his own by finessing and trick :
 He cast off his friends as a huntsman his pack,
 For he knew when he pleased he could whistle them
 back.

¹ The unfortunate Dr. Dodd.

² Dr. Kenrick, who read lectures at the Devil tavern, under the title of *The School of Shakspeare*.

³ James Macpherson, who lately, from the mere force of his style, wrote down the first poet of all antiquity.

Of praise a mere glutton, he swallow'd what came,
And the puff of a dunce, he mistook it for fame ;
Till his relish grown callous, almost to disease,
Who pepper'd the highest was surest to please.
But let us be candid, and speak out our mind ;
If dunces applauded, he paid them in kind.

Ye Kenricks, ye Kellys¹, and Woodfalls² so grave,
What a commerce was yours, while you got and
you gave !

How did Grub-street re-echo the shouts that you
raised,

While he was be-Roscious'd, and you were be-
praised !

But peace to his spirit; wherever it flies,
To act as an angel, and mix with the skies :
Those poets, who owe their best fame to his
skill,

Shall still be his flatterers, go where he will ;
Old Shakspeare receive him with praise and with
love,

And Beaumonts and Bens be his Kellys above.

Here Hickey reclines, a most blunt, pleasant
creature,

And slander itself must allow him good-nature :
He cherish'd his friend, and he relish'd a bumper ;
Yet one fault he had, and that one was a thumper.
Perhaps you may ask if the man was a miser ?

I answer no, no, for he always was wiser :
Too courteous, perhaps, or obligingly flat ?
His very worst foe can't accuse him of that :

¹ Hugh Kelly, author of *False Delicacy*, *Word to the Wise*,
Clementina, *School for Wives*, &c. &c.

² Mr. W. Woodfall, printer of the *Morning Chronicle*.

Perhaps he confided in men as they go,
And so was too foolishly honest? Ah, no!
Then what was his failing? Come, tell it, and
burn ye :—

He was, could he help it? a special attorney.

Here Reynolds is laid, and, to tell you my mind,
He has not left a wiser or better behind.

His pencil was striking, resistless, and grand;
His manners were gentle, complying, and bland;
Still born to improve us in every part—

His pencil our faces, his manners our heart:
To coxcombs averse, yet, most civilly steering,
When they judged without skill, he was still hard
of hearing;

When they talk'd of their Raphaels, Corregios, and
stuff,

He shifted his trumpet¹, and only took snuff.

¹ Sir Joshua Reynolds was so remarkably deaf as to be under the necessity of using an ear-trumpet in company.

POSTSCRIPT.

After the fourth edition of this poem was printed, the publisher received the following epitaph on Mr. Whitefoord :
from a friend of the late Dr. Goldsmith.

HERE Whitefoord reclines, and deny it who can,
Though he merrily lived, he is now a grave¹ man :
Rare compound of oddity, frolic, and fun,
Who relish'd a joke, and rejoiced in a pun ;
Whose temper was generous, open, sincere ;
A stranger to flattery, a stranger to fear ;
Who scatter'd around wit and humour at will ;
Whose daily *bons mots* half a column might fill :
A Scotchman, from pride and from prejudice free ;
A scholar, yet surely no pedant was he.
What pity, alas ! that so liberal a mind
Should so long be to newspaper essays confined !
Who perhaps to the summit of science could soar,
Yet content " if the table he set in a roar :"
Whose talents to fill any station were fit,
Yet happy if Woodfall² confess'd him a wit.

Ye newspaper witlings ! ye pert scribbling folks !
Who copied his squibs, and re-echoed his jokes ;

¹ Mr. Caleb Whitefoord, author of many humorous essays.

² Mr. W. was so notorious a punster, that Dr. Goldsmith said to say it was impossible to keep him company without being infected with the itch of punning.

³ Mr. H. S. Woodfall, printer of the Public Advertiser.

Ye tame imitators, ye servile herd, come,
Still follow your master, and visit his tomb :
To deck it, bring with you festoons of the vine,
And copious libations bestow on his shrine ;
Then strew all around it (you can do no less)
*Cross-readings, ship-news, and mistakes of the
press*¹.

Merry Whitefoord, farewell ! for thy sake I admit
That a Scot may have humour, I had almost said
wit :

This debt to thy memory I cannot refuse,
“ Thou best-humour’d man with the worst-hu-
mour’d muse.”

¹ Mr. Whitefoord has frequently indulged the town with humorous pieces under those titles in the Public Advertiser.



THE
H E R M I T.

“ TURN, gentle hermit of the dale,
And guide my lonely way
To where yon taper cheers the vale
With hospitable ray:

“ For here forlorn and lost I tread,
With fainting steps and slow,
Where wilds, immeasurably spread,
Seem lengthening as I go.”

“ Forbear, my son,” the hermit cries,
“ To tempt the dangerous gloom ;
For yonder faithless phantom flies
To lure thee to thy doom.

“ Here to the houseless child of want
My door is open still ;
And, though my portion is but scant,
I give it with good will.

“ Then turn to-night, and freely share
Whate’er my cell bestows ;
My rushy couch and frugal fare,
My blessing and repose.

" No flocks that range the valley free
To slaughter I condemn :
Taught by that Power that pities me,
I learn to pity them :

" But from the mountain's grassy side
A guiltless feast I bring ;
A scrip with herbs and fruits supplied,
And water from the spring.

" Then, pilgrim, turn, thy cares forego ;
All earth-born cares are wrong :
Man wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little long."

Soft as the dew from heaven descends,
His gentle accents fell :
'The modest stranger lowly bends,
And follows to the cell.

Far in a wilderness obscure
The lonely mansion lay ;
A refuge to the neighbouring poor,
And strangers led astray.

No stores beneath its humble thatch
Required a master's care ;
'The wicket, opening with a latch,
Received the harmless pair.

And now, when busy crowds retire
To take their evening rest,
The hermit trimm'd his little fire,
And cheer'd his pensive guest ;

And spread his vegetable store,
And gaily press'd, and smiled ;
And, skill'd in legendary lore,
The lingering hours beguiled.

Around in sympathetic mirth
Its tricks the kitten tries ;
The cricket chirrup's in the hearth,
The crackling faggot flies :

But nothing could a charm impart
To soothe the stranger's woe ;
For grief was heavy at his heart,
And tears began to flow.

His rising cares the hermit spied,
With answering care oppress :
“ And whence, unhappy youth,” he cried,
“ The sorrows of thy breast ?

“ From better habitations spurn'd,
Reluctant dost thou rove ?
Or grieve for friendship unreturn'd,
Or unregarded love ?

“ Alas ! the joys that fortune brings
Are trifling, and decay ;
And those who prize the paltry things
More trifling still than they.

“ And what is friendship but a name,
A charm that lulls to sleep ;
A shade that follows wealth or fame,
And leaves the wretch to weep ?

“ And love is still an emptier sound ;
The modern fair-one’s jest :
On earth unseen, or only found
To warm the turtle’s nest.

“ For shame, fond youth, thy sorrows hush,
And spurn the sex,” he said :
But, while he spoke, a rising blush
His love-lorn guest betray’d.

Surprised he sees new beauties rise,
Swift mantling to the view ;
Like colours o’er the morning skies,
As bright, as transient too.

The bashful look, the rising breast,
Alternate spread alarms :
The lovely stranger stands confest
A maid in all her charms.

“ And, ah ! forgive a stranger rude,
A wretch forlorn,” she cried ;
“ Whose feet unhallow’d thus intrude
Where Heaven and you reside.

“ But let a maid thy pity share,
Whom love has taught to stray ;
Who seeks for rest, but finds despair
Companion of her way.

“ My father lived beside the Tyne,
A wealthy lord was he ;
And all his wealth was mark’d as mine ;
He had but only me.

- “ To win me from his tender arms
Unnumber'd suitors came,
• Who praised me for imputed charms,
And felt, or feign'd a flame.
- “ Each hour a mercenary crowd
With richest proffers strove :
Among the rest young Edwin bow'd,
But never talk'd of love.
- “ In humble, simplest habit clad,
No wealth or power had he ;
Wisdom and worth were all he had,
But these were all to me.
- “ The blossom opening to the day,
The dews of heaven refined,
Could nought of purity display
To emulate his mind.
- “ The dew, the blossoms of the tree,
With charms inconstant shine ;
Their charms were his, but, woe to me,
Their constancy was mine :
- “ For still I tried each fickle art,
Importunate and vain ;
And, while his passion touch'd my heart,
I triumph'd in his pain :
- “ Till, quite dejected with my scorn,
He left me to my pride ;
And sought a solitude forlorn
In secret, where he died.

“ But mine the sorrow, mine the fault,
And well my life shall pay;
I ’ll seek the solitude he sought,
And stretch me where he lay.

“ And there forlorn, despairing, hid,
I ’ll lay me down and die;
’Twas so for me that Edwin did,
And so for him will I.”

“ Forbid it, Heaven !” the hermit cried,
And clasp’d her to his breast :
The wondering fair-one turn’d to chide;
’Twas Edwin’s self that prest.

“ Turn, Angelina, ever dear,
My charmer, turn to see
Thy own, thy long-lost Edwin here,
Restored to love and thee.

“ Thus let me hold thee to my heart,
And every care resign.
And shall we never, never part,
My life—my all that ’s mine ?

“ No, never, from this hour to part,
We ’ll live and love so true,
The sigh that rends thy constant heart
Shall break thy Edwin’s too.”

STANZAS ON WOMAN.

WHEN lovely Woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray,
What charm can soothe her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away?

The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover,
And wring his bosom, is—to die.

S O N G.

O MEMORY! thou fond deceiver,
Still importunate and vain,
To former joys recurring ever,
And turning all the past to pain!

Thou, like the world, the oppress'd oppressing,
Thy smiles increase the wretch's woe;
And he who wants each other blessing
In thee must ever find a foe.

SONG,

FROM THE ORATORIO OF THE CAPTIVITY.

THE wretch condemn'd with life to part,
Still, still on hope relies ;
And every pang that rends the heart
Bids expectation rise.

Hope, like the glimmering taper's light,
Adorns and cheers the way ;
And still, as darker grows the night,
Emits a brighter ray.

EPITAPH ON DR. PARNELL.

THIS tomb, inscribed to gentle Parnell's name,
May speak our gratitude, but not his fame.
What heart but feels his sweetly moral lay,
That leads to truth through pleasure's flowery way ?
Celestial themes confess'd his tuneful aid ;
And Heaven, that lent him genius, was repaid.
Needless to him the tribute we bestow,
The transitory breath of fame below .
More lasting rapture from his works shall rise,
While converts thank their poet in the skies.



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VOL. VI.

AKENSIDE.
GRAY.
BEATTIE.

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AKENSIDE.

**THE
PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION,
AND
HYMN TO THE NAIADS.**



AKENSIDE.
PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.
ETC.



—— With fixed gaze
 He marks the rising phantoms——
Book III.

R. WALLER

LONDON

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THE DESIGN.

THERE are certain powers in human nature which seem to hold a middle place between the organs of bodily sense and the faculties of moral perception : they have been called by a very general name, **The Powers of Imagination.** Like the external senses, they relate to matter and motion ; and, at the same time, give the mind ideas analogous to those of moral approbation and dislike. As they are the inlets of some of the most exquisite pleasures with which we are acquainted, it has naturally happened that men of warm and sensible tempers have sought means to recal the delightful perceptions which they afford, independent of the objects which originally produced them. This gave rise to the imitative or designing Arts ; some of which, as **Painting and Sculpture,** directly copy the external appearances which were admired in Nature ; others, as **Music and Poetry,** bring them back to remembrance by signs universally established and understood.

But these Arts, as they grew more correct and deliberate, were of course led to extend their imitation beyond the peculiar objects of the imaginative powers ; especially Poetry, which, making use of language as the instrument by which it imitates, is consequently become an unlimited representative

of every species and mode of being. Yet as their intention was only to express the objects of Imagination, and as they still abound chiefly in ideas of that class, they of course retain their original character; and all the different pleasures which they excite, are termed, in general, Pleasures of Imagination.

The design of the following Poem is to give a view of these in the largest acceptation of the term; so that whatever our Imagination feels from the agreeable appearances of Nature, and all the various entertainment we meet with either in Poetry, Painting, Music, or any of the elegant Arts, might be deducible from one or other of those principles in the constitution of the human mind, which are here established and explained.

In executing this general plan, it was necessary first of all to distinguish the Imagination from our other faculties; and, in the next place to characterize those original forms or properties of being, about which it is conversant, and which are by nature adapted to it, as light is to the eyes, or truth to the understanding. These properties Mr. Addison has reduced to the three general classes of greatness, novelty, and beauty; and into these we may analyze every object, however complex, which, properly speaking, is delightful to the Imagination. But such an object may also include many other sources of pleasure; and its beauty, or novelty, or grandeur, will make a stronger impression by reason of this concurrence. Besides which, the imitative Arts, especially Poetry, owe much of their effect to a similar exhibition of properties quite foreign to the Imagination; insonmuch that in every

line of the most applauded poems, we meet with either ideas drawn from the external senses, or truths discovered to the understanding, or illustrations of contrivance and final causes ; or, above all the rest, with circumstances proper to awaken and engage the Passions. It was therefore necessary to enumerate and exemplify these different species of pleasure ; especially that from the passions, which, as it is supreme in the noblest work of human genius, so being in some particulars not a little surprising, gave an opportunity to enliven the didactic turn of the poem, by introducing an Allegory to account for the appearance.

After these parts of the subject, which hold chiefly of admiration, or naturally warm and interest the mind, a pleasure of a very different nature, that which arises from Ridicule, came next to be considered. As this is the foundation of the comic manner in all the Arts, and has been but very imperfectly treated by moral writers, it was thought proper to give it a particular illustration, and to distinguish the general sources from which the ridicule of characters is derived. Here too a change of style became necessary ; such a one as might yet be consistent, if possible, with the general taste of composition in the serious parts of the subject : nor is it an easy task to give any tolerable force to images of this kind, without running either into the gigantic expressions of the mock-heroic, or the familiar and poetical raillery of professed satire ; neither of which would have been proper here.

The materials of all Imitation being thus laid open, nothing now remained but to illustrate some particular pleasures which arise either from the re-

lations of different objects one to another, or from the nature of imitation itself. Of the first kind is that various and complicated resemblance existing between several parts of the material and immaterial worlds, which is the foundation of metaphor and wit. As it seems in a great measure to depend on the early association of our ideas, and as this habit of associating is the source of many pleasures and pains in life, and on that account bears a great share in the influence of Poetry and the other Arts, it is therefore mentioned here, and its effects described. Then follows a general account of the production of these elegant Arts, and of the secondary pleasure, as it is called, arising from the resemblance of their imitations to the original appearances of Nature. After which, the work concludes with some reflections on the general conduct of the powers of Imagination, and on their natural and moral usefulness in life.

Concerning the manner or turn of composition which prevails in this piece, little can be said with propriety by the author. He had two models; that ancient and simple one of the first Grecian poets, as it is refined by Virgil in the Georgics; and the familiar epistolary way of Horace. This latter has several advantages. It admits of a greater variety of style; it more readily engages the generality of readers, as partaking more of the air of conversation; and, especially with the assistance of rhyme, leads to a closer and more concise expression. Add to this, the example of the most perfect of modern poets, who has so happily applied this manner to the noblest parts of philosophy, that the public taste is in a great measure

formed to it alone. Yet, after all, the subject before us, tending almost constantly to admiration and enthusiasm, seemed rather to demand a more open, pathetic, and figured style. This, too, appeared more natural; as the author's aim was not so much to give formal precepts, or enter into the way of direct argumentation; as, by exhibiting the most engaging prospects of nature, to enlarge and harmonize the Imagination, and by that means insensibly dispose the minds of men to a similar taste and habit of thinking in religion, morals, and civil life. 'Tis on this account that he is so careful to point out the benevolent intention of the Author of Nature in every principle of the human constitution here insisted on; and also to unite the moral excellences of life in the same point of view with the mere external objects of good taste; thus recommending them in common to our natural propensity for admiring what is beautiful and lovely. The same views have also led him to introduce some sentiments which may perhaps be looked upon as not quite direct to the subject; but since they bear an obvious relation to it, the authority of Virgil (the faultless model of didactic poetry) will best support him in this particular. For the sentiments themselves he makes no apology.

ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed. Difficulty of treating it poetically.

The ideas of the Divine Mind the origin of every quality pleasing to the Imagination. The natural variety of constitution in the minds of men ; with its final cause. The idea of a fine imagination, and the state of the mind in the enjoyment of those pleasures which it affords. All the primary pleasures of the Imagination result from the perception of greatness, or wonderfulness, or beauty in objects. The pleasure from greatness, with its final cause. Pleasure from novelty or wonderfulness, with its final cause. Pleasure from beauty, with its final cause. The connexion of beauty with truth and good, applied to the conduct of life. Invitation to the study of moral philosophy. The different degrees of beauty in different species of objects—colour; shape; natural concretes; vegetables; animals; the mind. The sublime, the fair, the wonderful of the mind. The connexion of the Imagination and the moral faculty. Conclusion.

THE
PLEASURES
OF
IMAGINATION.

BOOK I.

WITH what attractive charms this goodly frame
Of Nature touches the consenting hearts
Of mortal men ; and what the pleasing stores
Which beauteous Imitation thence derives
To deck the poet's, or the painter's toil,
My verse unfolds. Attend, ye gentle powers
Of musical delight ! and while I sing
Your gifts, your honours, dance around my strain.

Thou, smiling queen of every tuneful breast,
Indulgent Fancy ! from the fruitful banks
Of Avon, whence thy rosy fingers cull
Fresh flowers and dews to sprinkle on the turf
Where Shakspeare lies, be present : and with thee
Let Fiction come, upon her vagrant wings
Wafting ten thousand colours through the air,
Which by the glances of her magic eye,
She blends and shifts at will, through countless
Her wild creation. Goddess of the lyre, [forms,
Which rules the accents of the moving sphere,

Wilt thou, eternal Harmony ! descend,
And join this festive train ? for with thee comes
The guide, the guardian of their lovely sports,
Majestic Truth ; and where Truth deigns to come,
Her sister Liberty will not be far.

Be present, all ye Genii, who conduct
The wandering footsteps of the youthful bard,
New to your springs and shades : who touch his ear
With finer sounds ; who heighten to his eye
The bloom of Nature ; and before him turn
The gayest, happiest attitude of things.

Oft have the laws of each poetic strain
The critic-verse employ'd ; yet still unsung
Lay this prime subject, though importing most
A poet's name : for fruitless is the attempt,
By dull obedience and by creeping toil
Obscure, to conquer the severe ascent
Of high Parnassus. Nature's kindling breath
Must fire the chosen genius ; Nature's hand
Must string his nerves and imp his eagle wings,
Impatient of the painful steep, to soar
High as the summit ; there to breathe at large
Ethereal air ; with bards and sages old,
Immortal sons of praise. These flattering scenes,
To this neglected labour court my song ;
Yet not unconscious what a doubtful task
To paint the finest features of the mind,
And to most subtle and mysterious things
Give colour, strength, and motion. But the love
Of Nature and the Muses bids explore,
Through secret paths erewhile untrod by man,
The fair poetic region, to detect
Untasted springs, to drink inspiring draughts,
And shade my temples with unfading flowers,

Cull'd from the laureate vale's profound recess,
Where never poet gain'd a wreath before.

From Heaven my strains begin ; from Heaven
descends

The flame of genius to the human breast,
And love and beauty, and poetic joy,
And inspiration. Ere the radiant sun
Sprang from the east, or 'mid the vault of night
'The moon suspended her serener lamp ;
Ere mountains, woods, or streams adorn'd the globe,
Or Wisdom taught the sons of men her lore ;
Then lived the Almighty One ; then, deep retired,
In his unfathom'd essence, view'd the forms,
The forms eternal of created things ;
The radiant sun, the moon's nocturnal lamp,
The mountains, woods and streams, the rolling globe,
And Wisdom's mien celestial. From the first
Of days, on them his love divine he fix'd,
His admiration : till in time complete,
What he admired and loved, his vital smile
Unfolded into being. Hence the breath
Of life informing each organic frame ;
Hence the green earth, and wild resounding waves ;
Hence light and shade alternate ; warmth and cold ;
And clear autumnal skies and vernal showers,
And all the fair variety of things.

But not alike to every mortal eye
Is this great scene unveil'd. For since the claims
Of social life, to different labours urge
The active powers of man ; with wise intent
The hand of Nature on peculiar minds
Imprints a different bias, and to each
Decrees its province in the common toil.
To some she taught the fabric of the sphere,
The changeful moon, the circuit of the stars,

The golden zones of Heaven : to some she gave
To weigh the moment of eternal things,
Of time, and space, and fate's unbroken chain,
And will's quick impulse : others by the hand
She led o'er vales and mountains, to explore
What healing virtue swells the tender veins
Of herbs and flowers ; or what the beams of morn
Draw forth, distilling from the clifted rind
In balmy tears. But some, to higher hopes
Were destined ; some within a finer mould
She wrought, and temper'd with a purer flame.
To these the Sire Omnipotent unfolds
The world's harmonious volume, there to read
The transcript of Himself. On every part
They trace the bright impressions of his hand
In earth or air, the meadow's purple stores,
The moon's mild radiance, or the virgin's form
Blooming with rosy smiles, they see portray'd
That uncreated beauty, which delights
The mind supreme. They also feel her charms,
Enamour'd ; they partake the eternal joy.

For as old Memnon's image, long renown'd
By fabling Nilus, to the quivering touch
Of Titan's ray, with each repulsive string
Consenting, sounded through the warbling air
Unbidden strains ; ev'n so did Nature's hand
To certain species of external things
Attune the finer organs of the mind :
So the glad impulse of congenial powers,
Or of sweet sounds, or fair proportion'd form,
The grace of motion, or the bloom of light,
Thrills through Imagination's tender frame,
From nerve to nerve : all naked and alive
They catch the spreading rays ; till now the soul
At length discloses every tuneful spring,



To that harmonious movement from without
Responsive. Then the inexpressive strain
Diffuses its enchantment : Fancy dreams
Of sacred fountains and Elysian groves,
And vales of bliss : the intellectual power
Bends from his awful throne a wondering ear,
And smiles : the passions, gently soothed away,
Sink to divine repose, and love and joy
Alone are waking ; love and joy, serene
As airs that fan the summer. O ! attend,
Whoe'er thou art, whom these delights can touch,
Whose candid bosom the refining love
Of Nature warms, O ! listen to my song ;
And I will guide thee to her favourite walks,
And teach thy solitude her voice to hear,
And point her loveliest features to thy view.

Know then, whate'er of Nature's pregnant stores ;
Whate'er of mimic Art's reflected forms
With love and admiration thus inflame
The powers of Fancy, her delighted sons
To three illustrious orders have referr'd ;
Three sister-graces, whom the painter's hand,
The poet's tongue, confesses ; the sublime,
The wonderful, the fair. I see them dawn !
I see the radiant visions, where they rise
More lovely than when Lucifer displays
His beaming forehead through the gates of morn,
To lead the train of Phœbus and the Spring.

Say, why was man so eminently raised
Amid the vast creation¹ ; why ordain'd
Through life and death to dart his piercing eye,

¹ In apologizing for the frequent negligences of the sublimest authors of Greece, ' Those godlike geniuses,' says Longinus, ' were well assured, that Nature had not intended man for a low-spirited or ignoble being ; but bringing us

With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame ;
 But that the Omnipotent might send him forth
 In sight of mortal and immortal powers,
 As on a boundless theatre, to run
 The great career of justice ; to exalt
 His generous aim to all diviner deeds ;
 To chase each partial purpose from his breast ;
 And through the mists of passion and of sense,
 And through the tossing tide of chance and pain,
 To hold his course unfaltering, while the voice
 Of Truth and Virtue, up the steep ascent
 Of Nature, calls him to his high reward,
 The applauding smile of Heaven ? Else wherefore
 In mortal bosoms this unquenched hope, [burns
 That breathes from day to day sublimer things,
 And mocks possession ? wherefore darts the mind,
 With such resistless ardour to embrace
 Majestic forms ; impatient to be free,
 Spurning the gross control of wilful might ;

into life and the midst of this wide universe, as before a
 multitude assembled at some heroic solemnity, that we
 might be spectators of all her magnificence, and candidates
 high in emulation for the prize of glory ; she has there-
 fore implanted in our souls an inextinguishable love of
 every thing great and exalted, of every thing which appears
 divine beyond our comprehension. Whence it comes to
 pass, that even the whole world is not an object sufficient
 for the depth and rapidity of human imagination, which
 often sallies forth beyond the limits of all that surrounds
 us. Let any man cast his eye through the whole circle of
 our existence, and consider how especially it abounds in
 excellent and grand objects, he will soon acknowledge for
 what enjoyments and pursuits we were destined. Thus by
 the very propensity of nature we are led to admire, not little
 springs or shallow rivulets, however clear and delicious, but
 the Nile, the Rhine, the Danube ; and, much more than all,
 the Ocean,' &c. Dionys. Longin. de Sublim. § xxiv.

Proud of the strong contention of her toils ;
Proud to be daring ? Who but rather turns
To Heaven's broad fire his unconstrained view,
Than to the glimmering of a waxen flame ?
Who that, from Alpine heights, his labouring eye
Shoots round the wide horizon, to survey
Nilus or Ganges rolling his bright wave
Through mountains, plains, through empires black
with shade,
And continents of sand ; will turn his gaze
To mark the windings of a scanty rill
That murmurs at his feet ? The high-born soul
Disdains to rest her heaven-aspiring wing
Beneath its native quarry. Tired of earth
And this diurnal scene, she springs aloft
Through fields of air ; pursues the flying storm ;
Rides on the vollied lightning through the heavens ;
Or, yoked with whirlwinds and the northern blast,
Sweeps the long tract of day. Then high she soars
The blue profound, and hovering round the sun,
Beholds him pouring the redundant stream
Of light ; beholds his unrelenting sway
Bend the reluctant planets to absolve
The fated rounds of Time. Thence, far effused,
She darts her swiftness up the long career
Of devious comets ; through its burning signs
Exulting measures the perennial wheel
Of Nature, and looks back on all the stars,
Whose blended light, as with a milky zone,
Invests the orient. Now amazed she views
The empyreal waste^a, where happy spirits hold,

^a ' Ne se peut-il point qu'il y a un grand espace au delà
de la region des étoiles ? Que ce soit le ciel empyrée, ou non,

Beyond this concave heaven, their calm abode ;
 And fields of radiance, whose unfading light³
 Has travell'd the profound six thousand years,
 Nor yet arrives in sight of mortal things.
 Even on the barriers of the world, untired,
 She meditates the eternal depth below ;
 Till half recoiling, down the headlong steep
 She plunges ; soon o'erwhelm'd and swallow'd up
 In that immense of being. There her hopes
 Rest at the fated goal. For from the birth
 Of mortal man, the Sovereign Maker said,
 That not in humble nor in brief delight,
 Not in the fading echoes of Renown,
 Power's purple robes, nor Pleasure's flowery lap,
 The soul should find enjoyment ; but from these
 Turning disdainful to an equal good,
 Through all the ascent of things enlarge her view,
 Till every bound at length should disappear,
 And infinite perfection close the scene.

Call now to mind what high capacious powers
 Lie folded up in man ; how far beyond
 The praise of mortals, may the eternal growth
 Of Nature to perfection half divine,
 Expand the blooming soul ? What pity then
 Should sloth's unkindly fogs depress to earth

toujours cet espace immense qui environne toute cette région, pourra être rempli de bonheur et de gloire. Il pourra être conçu comme l'océan, où se rendent les fleuves de toutes les créatures bienheureuses, quand elles seront venues à leur perfection dans le système des étoiles.' Leibnitz, dans la Theodicée, part i. § 19.

³ It was a notion of the great Mr. Huygens, that there may be fixed stars at such a distance from our solar system, that their light should not have had time to reach us, even from the creation of the world to this day.

Her tender blossom ; choke the streams of life,
And blast her spring ! Far otherwise design'd
Almighty Wisdom : Nature's happy cares
The obedient heart far otherwise incline.
Witness the sprightly joy when aught unknown
Strikes the quick sense, and wakes each active
To brisker measures : witness the neglect [power
Of all familiar prospects, though beheld
With transport once ⁴ ; the fond attentive gaze

⁴ It is here said, that in consequence of the love of novelty, objects which at first were highly delightful to the mind, lose that effect by repeated attention to them. But the instance of habit is opposed to this observation ; for there, objects at first distasteful are in time rendered entirely agreeable by repeated attention.

The difficulty in this case will be removed, if we consider that, when objects at first agreeable, lose that influence by frequently recurring, the mind is wholly passive, and the perception involuntary ; but habit, on the other hand, generally supposes choice and activity accompanying it : so that the pleasure arises here not from the object, but from the mind's conscious determination of its own activity ; and consequently increases in proportion to the frequency of that determination.

It will still be urged, perhaps, that a familiarity with disagreeable objects renders them at length acceptable, even when there is no room for the mind to resolve or act at all. In this case, the appearance must be accounted for one of these ways :—

The pleasure from habit may be merely negative. The object at first gave uneasiness : this uneasiness gradually wears off as the object grows familiar : and the mind, finding it at last entirely removed, reckons its situation really pleasurable, compared with what it had experienced before.

The dislike conceived of the object at first, might be owing to prejudice or want of attention. Consequently the mind being necessitated to review it often, may at length perceive its own mistake, and be reconciled to what it had

Of young astonishment ; the sober zeal
 Of age, commenting on prodigious things .
 For such the bounteous providence of Heaven,
 In every breast implanting this desire
 Of objects new and strange^s, to urge us on
 With unremitted labour to pursue
 Those sacred stores that wait the ripening soul,
 In Truth's exhaustless bosom. What need words
 To paint its power ? For this the daring youth
 Breaks from his weeping mother's anxious arms,
 In foreign climes to rove : the pensive sage,
 Heedless of sleep, or midnight's harmful damp,
 Hangs o'er the sickly taper : and untired
 The virgin follows, with enchanted step,
 The mazes of some wild and wondrous tale,
 From morn to eve ; unmindful of her form,
 Unmindful of the happy dress that stole

looked on with aversion. In which case, a sort of instinctive justice naturally leads it to make amends for the injury, by running toward the other extreme of fondness and attachment.

Or lastly, though the object itself should always continue disagreeable, yet circumstances of pleasure or good fortune may occur along with it. Thus an association may arise in the mind, and the object never be remembered without those pleasing circumstances attending it; by which means the disagreeable impression which it at first occasioned will in time be quite obliterated.

5 These two ideas are oft confounded; though it is evident the mere novelty of an object makes it agreeable, even where the mind is not affected with the least degree of wonder: whereas wonder indeed always implies novelty, being never excited by common or well-known appearances. But the pleasure in both cases is explicable from the same final cause, the acquisition of knowledge and enlargement of our views of nature: on this account it is natural to treat of them together.

The wishes of the youth, when every maid
With envy pined. Hence, finally, by night,
The village-matron round the blazing hearth
Suspends the infant-audience with her tales,
Breathing astonishment ! of witching rhymes,
And evil spirits ; of the death-bed call
Of him who robb'd the widow, and devour'd
The orphan's portion ; of unquiet souls
Risen from the grave to ease the heavy guilt
Of deeds in life conceal'd : of shapes that walk
At dead of night, and clank their chains, and wave
The torch of hell around the murderer's bed.
At every solemn pause the crowd recoil,
Gazing each other speechless ; and congeal'd
With shivering sighs ; till eager for the event,
Around the beldame all erect they hang ;
Each trembling heart with grateful terrors quell'd.

But lo ! disclosed in all her smiling pomp,
Where Beauty, onward moving, claims the verse
Her charms inspire : the freely-flowing verse
In thy immortal praise, O form divine ! [thee,
Smoothes her mellifluent stream. Thee, Beauty,
The regal dome, and thy enlivening ray
The mossy roofs adore : thou, better sun !
For ever beamest on the enchanted heart
Love, and harmonious wonder, and delight
Poetic. Brightest progeny of Heaven !
How shall I trace thy features ? where select
The roseate hues to emulate thy bloom ?—
Haste then, my song, through nature's wide expanse,
Haste then, and gather all her comeliest wealth,
Whate'er bright spoils the florid earth contains,
Whate'er the waters, or the liquid air,
To deck thy lovely labour. Wilt thou fly

With laughing Autumn to the Atlantic isles,
And range with him the Hesperian field, and see,
Where'er his fingers touch the fruitful grove,
The branches shoot with gold ; where'er his step
Marks the glad soil, the tender clusters glow
With purple ripeness, and invest each hill
As with the blushes of an evening-sky ?
Or wilt thou rather stoop thy vagrant plume,
Where, gliding through his daughter's honour'd
The smooth Penéus from his glassy flood [shades,
Reflects purpureal Tempè's pleasant scene ?
Fair Tempè ! haunt beloved of sylvan powers,
Of Nymphs and Fauns ; where in the golden age
They play'd in secret on the shady brink
With ancient Pan : while round their choral steps
Young Hours and genial Gales with constant hand
Shower'd blossoms, odours, shower'd ambrosial
dews,

And Spring's Elysian bloom. Her flowery store
To thee nor Tempè shall refuse, nor watch
Of winged Hydra guard Hesperian fruits
From thy free spoil. O bear then, unproved,
Thy smiling treasures to the green recess
Where young Dione stays. With sweetest airs
Entice her forth to lend her angel-form
For Beauty's honour'd image. Hither turn
Thy graceful footsteps ; hither, gentle maid,
Incline thy polish'd forehead : let thy eyes
Effuse the mildness of their azure dawn ;
And may the fauning breezes waft aside
Thy radiant locks : disclosing, as it bends
With airy softness from the marble neck,
The cheek fair-blooming, and the rosy lip,
Where winning smiles and pleasures sweet as love,

With sanctity and wisdom, tempering blend
Their soft allurements. Then the pleasing force
Of Nature, and her kind parental care
Worthier I'd sing: then all the enamour'd youth,
With each admiring virgin, to my lyre
Should throng attentive, while I point on high
Where Beauty's living image, like the Morn
That wakes in Zephyr's arms the blushing May,
Moves onward; or as Venus, when she stood
Effulgent on the pearly car, and smiled,
Fresh from the deep, and conscious of her form,
To see the Tritons tune their vocal shells,
And each cerulean sister of the flood
With loud acclaim attend her o'er the waves,
To seek the Idalian bower. Ye smiling band
Of youths and virgins, who through all the maze
Of young desire with rival steps pursue
This charm of Beauty; if the pleasing toil
Can yield a moment's respite, hither turn
Your favourable ear, and trust my words.
I do not mean to wake the gloomy form
Of Superstition dress'd in Wisdom's garb,
To damp your tender hopes: I do not mean
To bid the jealous Thunderer fire the heavens,
Or shapes infernal rend the groaning earth
To fright you from your joys: my cheerful song
With better omens calls you to the field,
Pleased with your generous ardour in the chase,
And warm like you. Then tell me, for ye know,
Does Beauty ever deign to dwell where health
And active use are strangers? Is her charm
Confess'd in aught, whose most peculiar ends
Are lame and fruitless? Or did Nature mean
This pleasing call the herald of a lie;

To hide the shame of discord and disease,
 And catch with fair hypocrisy the heart
 Of idle faith? O no! with better cares
 The indulgent mother, conscious how infirm
 Her offspring tread the paths of good and ill,
 By this illustrious image, in each kind
 Still most illustrious where the object holds
 Its native powers most perfect, she by this
 Illumes the headstrong impulse of desire,
 And sanctifies his choice. The generous glebe
 Whose bosom smiles with verdure, the clear tract
 Of streams delicious to the thirsty soul,
 The bloom of nectar'd fruitage ripe to sense,
 And every charm of animated things,
 Are only pledges of a state sincere,
 The integrity and order of their frame,
 When all is well within, and every end
 Accomplish'd. Thus was Beauty sent from Heaven,
 The lovely ministress of truth and good
 In this dark world: for truth and good are one,
 And Beauty dwells in them, and they in her,
 With like participation⁶. Wherefore then,

⁶ 'Do you imagine,' says Socrates to Aristippus, 'that what is good is not beautiful? Have you not observed that these appearances always coincide? Virtue, for instance, in the same respect as to which we call it good, is ever acknowledged to be beautiful also. In the characters of men we always* join the two denominations together. The beauty of human bodies corresponds, in like manner, with that economy of parts which constitutes them good; and in every circumstance of life, the same object is constantly accounted both beautiful and good, inasmuch as it answers

* This the Athenians did in a peculiar manner, by the words, καλοκαγαθός, καλοκαγαθία.

O sons of Earth ! would ye dissolve the tie ?
O wherefore, with a rash impetuous aim,

the purposes for which it was designed.' Xenophont.
Memorab. Socrat. l. iii. c. 8.

This excellent observation has been illustrated and extended by the noble restorer of ancient philosophy; see the *Characteristics*, vol. ii. p. 339 and 422, and vol. iii. p. 131. and another ingenious author has particularly shown, that it holds in the general laws of nature, in the works of art, and the conduct of the sciences. Inquiry into the original of our ideas of beauty and virtue, *Treat. i. § 8.* As to the connexion between beauty and truth, there are two opinions concerning it. Some philosophers assert an independent and invariable law in nature, in consequence of which all rational beings must alike perceive beauty in some certain proportions, and deformity in the contrary. And this necessity being supposed the same with that which commands the assent or dissent of the understanding, it follows of course that Beauty is founded on the universal and unchangeable law of Truth.

But others there are, who believe Beauty to be merely a relative and arbitrary thing; that indeed it was a benevolent provision in nature to annex so delightful a sensation to those objects which are best and most perfect in themselves, that so we might be engaged to the choice of them at once, and without staying to infer their usefulness from their structure and effects; but that it is not impossible, in a physical sense, that two beings, of equal capacities for truth, should perceive, one of them beauty, and the other deformity, in the same proportions. And upon this supposition, by that truth which is always connected with beauty, nothing more can be meant than the conformity of any object to those proportions upon which, after careful examination, the beauty of that species is found to depend. Polycletus, for instance, a famous ancient sculptor, from an accurate mensuration of the several parts of the most perfect human bodies, deduced a canon or system of proportions, which was the rule of all succeeding artists. Suppose a statue modelled according to this: a man of mere natural taste, upon looking at it, without entering into its proportions, confesses and admires its beauty; whereas a

Seek ye those flowery joys with which the hand
 Of lavish Fancy paints each flattering scene
 Where Beauty seems to dwell, nor once inquire
 Where is the sanction of eternal Truth,
 Or where the seal of undeceitful good,
 To save your search from folly? Wanting these,
 Lo! Beauty withers in your void embrace,
 And with the glittering of an idiot's toy
 Did Fancy mock your vows. Nor let the gleam
 Of youthful hope, that shines upon your hearts,
 Be chill'd or clouded at this awful task,
 To learn the lore of undeceitful good,
 And truth eternal. Though the poisonous charms
 Of baleful Superstition guide the feet
 Of servile numbers, through a dreary way
 To their abode, through deserts, thorns, and mire;
 And leave the wretched pilgrim all forlorn
 To muse at last, amid the ghostly gloom
 Of graves, and hoary vaults, and cloister'd cells;
 To walk with spectres through the midnight shade,
 And to the screaming owl's accursed song
 Attune the dreadful workings of his heart;
 Yet be not ye dismay'd. A gentler star
 Your lovely search illumines. From the grove
 Where Wisdom talk'd with her Athenian sons,
 Could my ambitious hand entwine a wreath
 Of Plato's olive with the Mantuan bay,
 Then should my powerful verse at once dispel
 Those monkish horrors: then in light divine
 Disclose the Elysian prospect, where the steps
 Of those whom Nature charms, through blooming
 walks,

professor of the art applies his measures to the head, the
 neck, or the hand; and, without attending to its beauty,
 pronounces the workmanship to be just and true.

Through fragrant mountains and poetic streams,
Amid the train of sages, heroes, hards,
Led by their winged Genius, and the choir
Of laurell'd Science and harmonious Art,
Proceed exulting to the eternal shrine,
Where Truth conspicuous with her sister-twins,
The undivided partners of her sway,
With Good and Beauty reigns. O let not us,
Lull'd by luxurious Pleasure's languid strain,
Or crouching to the frowns of bigot-rage,
O let us not a moment pause to join
That godlike band. And if the gracious Power
Who first awaken'd my untutor'd song,
Will to my invocation breathe anew
The tuneful spirit ; then through all our paths,
Ne'er shall the sound of this devoted lyre
Be wanting ; whether on the rosy mead,
When Summer smiles, to warn the melting heart
Of Luxury's allurements ; whether firm
Against the torrent and the stubborn hill
To urge bold Virtue's unremitted nerve,
And wake the strong divinity of soul
That conquers chance and fate ; or whether struck
For sounds of triumph, to proclaim her toils
Upon the lofty summit, round her brow
To twine the wreath of incorruptive praise ;
To trace her hallow'd light through future worlds,
And bless Heaven's image in the heart of man.

Thus with a faithful aim have we presumed,
Adventurous, to delineate Nature's form ;
Whether in vast, majestic pomp array'd,
Or dress'd for pleasing wonder, or serene
In Beauty's rosy smile. It now remains,
'Through various being's fair-proportion'd scale,
To trace the rising lustre of her charms,

From their first twilight, shining forth at length
To full meridian splendour. Of degree
The least and lowliest, in the effusive warmth
(Of colours mingling with a random blaze,
Doth Beauty dwell : then higher in the line
And variation of determined shape,
Where Truth's eternal measures mark the bound
Of circle, cube, or sphere. The third ascent
Unites this varied symmetry of parts
With colour's bland allurements ; as the pearl
Shines in the concave of its azure bed,
And painted shells indent their speckled wreath.
Then more attractive rise the blooming forms
Through which the breath of Nature has infused
Her genial power, to draw with pregnant veins
Nutritious moisture from the bounteous earth,
In fruit and seed prolific : thus the flowers
Their purple honours with the Spring resume ;
And such the stately tree which Autumn bends
With blushing treasures. But more lovely still
Is Nature's charm, where to the full consent
Of complicated members, to the bloom
Of colour, and the vital change of growth,
Life's holy flame and piercing sense are given,
And active motion speaks the temper'd soul :
So moves the bird of Juno ; so the steed
With rival ardour beats the dusty plain,
And faithful dogs with eager airs of joy
Salute their fellows. Thus doth Beauty dwell
There most conspicuous, ev'n in outward shape,
Where dawns the high expression of a mind :
By steps conducting our enraptured search
To that eternal origin, whose power,
Through all the unbounded symmetry of things,
Like rays effulging from the parent Sun,

This endless mixture of her charms diffused.
Mind, mind alone, (bear witness, Earth and Heaven!)
The living fountains in itself contains
Of beauteous and sublime: here, hand in hand,
Sit paramount the Graces; here enthroned,
Celestial Venus, with divinest airs,
Invites the soul to never-fading joy.
Look then abroad through Nature, to the range
Of planets, suns, and adamantine spheres
Wheeling unshaken through the void immense;
And speak, O man! does this capacious scene
With half that kindling majesty dilate
Thy strong conception, as when Brutus rose
Refulgent from the stroke of Cæsar's fate,⁷
Amid the crowd of patriots; and his arm
Aloft extending, like eternal Jove,
When guilt brings down the thunder, call'd aloud
On Tully's name, and shook his crimson steel,
And bade the father of his country, hail!
For lo! the tyrant prostrate on the dust,
And Rome again is free! Is aught so fair
In all the dewy landscapes of the Spring,
In the bright eye of Hesper or the Morn,
In Nature's fairest forms, is aught so fair
As virtuous friendship? as the candid blush
Of him who strives with fortune to be just?
The graceful tear that streams for others' woes?
Or the mild majesty of private life,
Where Peace with ever-blooming olive crowns
The gate; where Honour's liberal hands effuse
Unenvied treasures, and the snowy wings

7 Cicero himself describes this fact—'Cæsare interfecto, statim cruentum alte extollens M. Brutus pugionem, Ciceronem nominatim exclamavit, atque ei recuperatam libertatem est gratulatus.' Cic. Philipp. ii. 12.

Of Innocence and Love protect the scene ?
Once more search, undismay'd, the dark profound
Where Nature works in secret ; view the beds
Of mineral treasure, and the eternal vault
That bounds the hoary ocean ; trace the forms
Of atoms moving with incessant change
Their elemental round ; behold the seeds
Of being, and the energy of life
Kindling the mass with ever-active flame :
Then to the secrets of the working mind
Attentive turn ; from dim oblivion call
Her fleet, ideal band ; and bid them go !
Break through Time's barrier, and o'ertake the hour
That saw the heavens created : then declare
If aught were found in those external scenes
To move thy wonder now. For what are all
The forms which brute, unconscious matter wears,
Greatness of bulk, or symmetry of parts ?
Not reaching to the heart, soon feeble grows
The superficial impulse ; dull their charms,
And satiate soon, and pall the languid eye.
Not so the moral species, nor the powers
Of genius and design ; the ambitious mind
There sees herself : by these congenial forms
Touch'd and awaken'd, with intenser act
She bends each nerve, and meditates well-pleased
Her features in the mirror. For of all
The inhabitants of earth, to man alone
Creative Wisdom gave to lift his eye
To Truth's eternal measures ; thence to frame
The sacred laws of action and of will,
Discerning justice from unequal deeds,
And temperance from folly. But beyond
This energy of Truth, whose dictates bind
Assenting reason, the benignant Sire,

To deck the honour'd paths of just and good,
Has added bright Imagination's rays :
Where Virtue, rising from the awful depth
Of Truth's mysterious bosom, ⁸ doth forsake
'The unadorn'd condition of her birth ;
And dress'd by Fancy in ten thousand hues,
Assumes a various feature, to attract,
With charms responsive to each gazer's eye,
The hearts of men. Amid his rural walk,
The ingenuous youth, whom Solitude inspires
With purest wishes, from the pensive shade
Beholds her moving, like a virgin-muse
That wakes her lyre to some indulgent theme
Of harmony and wonder ! while among
The herd of servile minds, her strenuous form
Indignant flashes on the patriot's eye,
And through the rolls of memory appeals
To ancient honour, or in act serene,
Yet watchful, raises the majestic sword
Of public Power, from dark Ambition's reach
To guard the sacred volume of the laws.

Genius of ancient Greece ! whose faithful steps
Well-pleased I follow, through the sacred paths
Of Nature and of Science ; nurse divine
Of all heroic deeds and fair desires !
O ! let the breath of thy extended praise
Inspire my kindling bosom to the height
Of this untempted theme. Nor be my thoughts
Presumptuous counted, if amid the calm
That soothes this vernal evening into smiles,

⁸ According to the opinion of those, who assert moral obligation to be founded on an immutable and universal law ; and that which is usually called the moral sense, to be determined by the peculiar temper of the imagination and the earliest associations of ideas.

I steal impatient from the sordid haunts
Of Strife and low Ambition, to attend
Thy sacred presence in the silvan shade,
By their malignant footsteps ne'er profaned.
Descend, propitious ! to my favour'd eye ;
Such in thy mien, thy warm, exalted air,
As when the Persian tyrant, foil'd and stung
With shame and desperation, gnash'd his teeth
To see thee rend the pageants of his throne ;
And at the lightning of thy lifted spear
Crouch'd like a slave. Bring all thy martial spoils,
Thy palms, thy laurels, thy triumphal songs,
Thy smiling band of arts, thy godlike sires
Of civil wisdom, thy heroic youth
Warm from the schools of glory. Guide my way
Through fair Lycéum's⁹ walk, the green retreats
Of Academus¹⁰, and the thymy vale,
Where oft enchanted with Socratic sounds,
Ilissus¹¹ pure devolved his tuneful stream
In gentler murmurs. From the blooming store
Of these auspicious fields, may I unblamed
Transplant some living blossoms to adorn
My native clime : while far above the flight
Of Fancy's plume aspiring, I unlock
The springs of ancient wisdom ! while I join
Thy name, thrice honour'd ! with the immortal praise
Of Nature ; while to my compatriot youth
I point the high example of thy sons,
And tune to Attic themes the British lyre.

⁹ The school of Aristotle.

¹⁰ The school of Plato.

¹¹ One of the rivers on which Athens was situated. Plato, in some of his finest dialogues, lays the scene of the conversations with Socrates on its banks.

**THE
PLEASURES
OF
IMAGINATION.**

BOOK THE SECOND.

ARGUMENT.

The separation of the works of Imagination from Philosophy the cause of their abuse among the moderns. Prospect of their re-union under the influence of public Liberty. Enumeration of accidental pleasures, which increase the effect of objects delightful to the Imagination. The pleasures of sense. Particular circumstances of the mind. Discovery of truth. Perception of contrivance and design. Emotion of the passions. All the natural passions partake of a pleasing sensation; with the final cause of this constitution illustrated by an allegorical vision, and exemplified in sorrow, pity, terror, and indignation.

THE
PLEASURES
OF
IMAGINATION.

BOOK II.

WHEN shall the laurel and the vocal string
Resume their honours ? When shall we behold
The tuneful tongue, the Promethean hand
Aspire to ancient praise ? Alas ! how faint,
How slow the dawn of beauty and of truth
Breaks the reluctant shades of gothic night
Which yet involve the nations ! Long they groan'd
Beneath the furies of rapacious force ;
Oft as the gloomy north, with iron swarms
Tempestuous pouring from her frozen caves,
Blasted the Italian shore, and swept the works
Of Liberty and Wisdom down the gulf
Of all-devouring night. As long immured
In noon-tide darkness by the glimmering lamp,
Each Muse and each fair Science pined away
The sordid hours : while foul, barbarian hands
Their mysteries profaned, unstrung the lyre,
And chain'd the soaring pinion down to earth.
At last the Muses rose¹, and spurn'd their bonds,

¹ About the age of Hugh Capet, founder of the third race of French kings, the poets of Provence were in high

And, wildly-warbling, scatter'd as they flew,
 Their blooming wreaths from fair Valclusa's bowers ¹
 To Arno's ³ myrtle border and the shore
 Of soft Parthenopè ⁴. But still the rage
 Of dire ambition and gigantic power ⁵,
 From public aims and from the busy walk
 Of civil commerce, drove the bolder train
 Of penetrating Science to the cells,
 Where studious Ease consumes the silent hour
 In shadowy searches and unfruitful care.
 Thus from their guardians torn, the tender arts ⁶

reputation; a sort of strolling bards or rhapsodists, who went about the courts of princes and noblemen, entertaining them at festivals with music and poetry. They attempted both the epic, ode, and satire; and abounded in a wild and fantastic vein of fable, partly allegorical, and partly founded on traditionary legends of the Saracen wars. These were the rudiments of Italian poetry. But their taste and composition must have been extremely barbarous, as we may judge by those who followed the turn of their fable in much politer times; such as Boiardo, Bernardo, Tasso, Ariosto, &c.

² The famous retreat of Francisco Petrarcha, the father of Italian poetry, and his mistress Laura, a lady of Avignon.

³ The river which runs by Florence, the birth-place of Dante and Boccacio.

⁴ Or Naples, the birth-place of Sannazaro. The great Torquato Tasso was born at Sorrento in the kingdom of Naples.

⁵ This relates to the cruel wars among the republics of Italy, and abominable politics of its little princes, about the fifteenth century. These at last, in conjunction with the papal power, entirely extinguished the spirit of liberty in that country, and established that abuse of the fine arts which has been since propagated over all Europe.

⁶ Nor were they only losers by the separation. For 'Philosophy itself (to use the words of a noble philosopher) being thus severed from the sprightly arts and sciences,

Of mimic fancy and harmonious joy,
To priestly domination and the lust
Of lawless courts, their amiable toil
For three inglorious ages have resign'd,
In vain reluctant : and Torquato's tongue
Was tuned for slavish pæans at the throne
Of tinsel pomp : and Raphael's magic hand
Effused its fair creation to enchant
The fond adoring herd, in Latian fanes,
'To blind belief; while on their prostrate necks
The sable tyrant plants his heel secure.
But now, behold ! the radiant era dawns,
When freedom's ample fabric, fixed at length
For endless years on Albion's happy shore
In full proportion, once more shall extend
To all the kindred powers of social bliss

must consequently grow dronish, insipid, pedantic, useless, and directly opposite to the real knowledge and practice of the world.' Insomuch that ' a gentleman (says another excellent writer) cannot easily bring himself to like so austere and ungainly a form : so greatly is it changed from what was once the delight of the finest gentlemen of antiquity, and their recreation after the hurry of public affairs !' From this condition it cannot be recovered but by uniting it once more with the works of Imagination ; and we have had the pleasure of observing a very great progress made towards their union in England within these few years. It is hardly possible to conceive them at a greater distance from each other than at the Revolution, when Locke stood at the head of one party, and Dryden of the other. But the general spirit of liberty, which has ever since been growing, naturally invited our men of wit and genius to improve that influence which the arts of persuasion gave them with the people, by applying them to subjects of importance to society. Thus poetry and eloquence became considerable ; and philosophy is now of course obliged to borrow of their embellishments, in order even to gain audience with the public.

A common mansion, a parental roof.
There shall the Virtues, there shall Wisdom's train,
Their long-lost friends rejoining, as of old,
Embrace the smiling family of Arts,
The Muses and the Graces. Then no more
Shall Vice, distracting their delicious gifts
To aims abhorr'd, with high distaste and scorn
Turn from their charms the philosophic eye,
The patriot-bosom; then no more the paths
Of public care or intellectual toil,
Alone by footsteps haughty and severe
In gloomy state be trod: the harmonious Muse
And her persuasive sisters then shall plant
Their sheltering laurels o'er the bleak ascent,
And scatter flowers along the rugged way.
Arm'd with the lyre, already have we dared
To pierce divine Philosophy's retreats,
And teach the Muse her lore; already strove
Their long-divided honours to unite,
While tempering this deep argument we sang
Of Truth and Beauty. Now the same glad task
Impends; now urging our ambitious toil,
We hasten to recount the various springs
Of adventitious pleasure, which adjoin
Their grateful influence to the prime effect
Of objects grand or beauteous, and enlarge
The complicated joy. The sweets of sense,
Do they not oft with kind accession flow,
To raise harmonious Fancy's native charm?
So while we taste the fragrance of the rose,
Glow not her blush the fairer? While we view
Amid the noontide walk a limpid rill
Gush through the trickling herbage, to the thirst
Of summer yielding the delicious draught
Of cool refreshment; o'er the mossy brink

Shines not the surface clearer, and the waves
With sweeter music murmur as they flow ?

Nor this alone ; the various lot of life
Oft from external circumstance assumes
A moment's disposition to rejoice
In those delights which at a different hour
Would pass unheeded. Fair the face of Spring,
When rural songs and odours wake the morn,
To every eye ; but how much more to his
Round whom the bed of sickness long diffused
Its melancholy gloom ! how doubly fair,
When first with fresh-born vigour he inhales
The balmy breeze, and feels the blessed sun
Warm at his bosom, from the springs of life
Chasing oppressive damps and languid pain !

Or shall I mention, where celestial Truth
Her awful light discloses, to bestow
A more majestic pomp on Beauty's frame ?
For man loves knowledge, and the beams of Truth
More welcome touch his understanding's eye,
Than all the blandishments of sound his ear,
Than all of taste his tongue. Nor ever yet
The melting rainbow's vernal-tinctured hues
To me have shone so pleasing, as when first
The hand of Science pointed out the path
In which the sun-beams gleaming from the west
Fall on the watery cloud, whose darksome veil
Involves the orient ; and that trickling shower
Piercing through every crystalline convex
Of clustering dew-drops to their flight opposed,
Recoil at length where concave all behind
The internal surface of each glassy orb
Repels their forward passage into air ;
That thence direct they seek the radiant goal
From which their course began ; and, as they strike

In different lines the gazer's obvious eye,
Assume a different lustre, through the breck
Of colours changing from the splendid rose
To the pale violet's dejected hue.

Or shall we touch that kind access of joy,
That springs to each fair object, while we trace
Through all its fabric, Wisdom's artful aim
Disposing every part, and gaining still
By means proportion'd her benignant end ?
Speak ye the pure delight, whose favour'd steps
The lamp of Science through the jealous maze
Of Nature guides, when haply you reveal
Her secret honours : whether in the sky,
The beauteous laws of light, the central powers
That wheel the pensile planets round the year ;
Whether in wonders of the rolling deep,
Or the rich fruits of all-sustaining earth,
Or fine-adjusted springs of life and sense,
Ye scan the counsels of their Author's hand.

What, when to raise the meditated scene,
The flame of passion, through the struggling soul
Deep-kindled, shows across that sudden blaze
The object of its rapture, vast of size,
With fiercer colours and a night of shade ?
What ? like a storm from their capacious bed
The sounding seas o'erwhelming, when the might
Of these eruptions, working from the depth
Of man's strong apprehension, shakes his frame
Ev'n to the base ; from every naked sense
Of pain or pleasure dissipating all
Opinion's feeble coverings, and the veil
Spun from the cobweb fashion of the times
To hide the feeling heart ? Then Nature speaks
Her genuine language, and the words of men,
Big with the very motion of their souls,

Declare with what accumulated force,
The impetuous nerve of passion urges on
The native weight and energy of things.

Yet more : her honours where nor Beauty claims,
Nor shows of good the thirsty sense allure,
From passion's power alone our nature holds
Essential pleasure⁷. Passion's fierce illapse
Rouses the mind's whole fabric ; with supplies
Of daily impulse keeps the elastic powers
Intensely poised, and polishes anew
By that collision all the fine machine :
Else rust would rise, and foulness, by degrees
Encumbering, choke at last what Heaven design'd
For ceaseless motion and a round of toil.
—But say, does every passion thus to man
Administer delight ? That name indeed
Becomes the rosy breath of love ; becomes
The radiant smiles of joy, the applauding hand
Of admiration : but the bitter shower

7 This very mysterious kind of pleasure, which is often found in the exercise of passions generally counted painful, has been taken notice of by several authors. Lucretius resolves it into self-love :

Suave mari magno, &c. lib. ii. 1.

As if a man was never pleased in being moved at the distress of a tragedy, without a cool reflection that though these fictitious personages were so unhappy, yet he himself was perfectly at ease and in safety. The ingenious author of the ' *Reflections Critiques sur la Poésie et sur la Peinture*,' accounts for it by the general delight which the mind takes in its own activity, and the abhorrence it feels of an indolent and inattentive state : and this, joined with the moral approbation of its own temper, which attends these emotions when natural and just, is certainly the true foundation of the pleasure, which, as it is the origin and basis of tragedy and epic, deserved a very particular consideration in this poem.

That sorrow sheds upon a brother's grave;
But the dumb palsy of nocturnal fear,
Or those consuming fires that gnaw the heart
Of panting indignation, find we there
To move delight?—Then listen while my tongue
The unalter'd will of Heaven with faithful awe
Reveals; what old Harmodius wont to teach
My early age; Harmodius, who had weigh'd
Within his learned mind whate'er the schools
Of Wisdom, or thy lonely-whispering voice,
O faithful Nature! dictate of the laws
Which govern and support this mighty frame
Of universal being. Oft the hours
From morn to eve have stolen unmark'd away,
While mute attention hung upon his lips,
As thus the sage his awful tale began:

‘Twas in the windings of an ancient wood,
When spotless youth with solitude resigns
To sweet philosophy the studious day,
What time pale Autumn shades the silent eve,
Musing I roved. Of good and evil much,
And much of mortal man my thought revolved;
When starting full on Fancy's gushing eye
The mournful image of Parthenia's fate,
That hour, O long beloved and long deplored!
When blooming youth, nor gentlest wisdom's arts,
Nor Hymen's honours gather'd for thy brow,
Nor all thy lover's, all thy father's tears,
Avail'd to snatch thee from the cruel grave;
Thy agonizing looks, thy last farewell,
Struck to the inmost feeling of my soul
As with the hand of Death. At once the shade
More horrid nodded o'er me, and the winds
With hoarser murmurings shook the branches. Dark
As midnight storms, the scene of human things

Appear'd before me ; deserts, burning sands,
Where the parch'd adder dies ; the frozen south,
And desolation blasting all the west
With rapine and with murder : tyrant-power
Here sits enthroned with blood ; the baleful charms
Of superstition there infect the skies,
And turn the sun to horror. " Gracious Heaven !
What is the life of man ? Or cannot these,
Not these portents thy awful will suffice ?
That, propagated thus beyond their scope,
They rise to act their cruelties anew
In my afflicted bosom, thus decreed
The universal sensitive of pain,
The wretched heir of evils not its own !"

' Thus I impatient ; when, at once effused,
A flashing torrent of celestial day
Burst through the shadowy void. With slow descent
A purple cloud came floating through the sky,
And poised at length within the circling trees,
Hung obvious to my view ; till opening wide
Its lucid orb, a more than human form
Emerging lean'd majestic o'er my head,
And instant thunder shook the conscious grove.
Then melted into air the liquid cloud,
And all the shining vision stood reveal'd.
A wreath of palm his ample forehead bound,
And o'er his shoulder, mantling to his knee,
Flow'd the transparent robe, around his waist
Collected with a radiant zone of gold
Ethereal : there in mystic signs engraved,
I read his office high and sacred name,
' Genius of human kind !' Appall'd, I gazed
The godlike presence ; for athwart his brow
Displeasure, temper'd with a mild concern,

Look'd down reluctant on me, and his words
Like distant thunders broke the murmuring air :

“ Vain are thy thoughts, O child of mortal birth !
And impotent thy tongue. Is thy short span
Capacious of this universal frame ?
Thy wisdom all-sufficient ? Thou, alas !
Dost thou aspire to judge between the Lord
Of Nature and his works ? to lift thy voice
Against the sovereign order he decreed,
All good and lovely ? to blaspheme the bands
Of tenderness innate and social love,
Holiest of things ! by which the general orb
Of being, as by adamantine links,
Was drawn to perfect union, and sustain'd
From everlasting ? Hast thou felt the pangs
Of softening sorrow, of indignant zeal
So grievous to the soul, as thence to wish
The ties of nature broken from thy frame ;
That so thy selfish, unrelenting heart
Might cease to mourn its lot, no longer then
The wretched heir of evils not its own ?
O fair benevolence of generous minds !
O man by Nature form'd for all mankind !”

‘ He spoke ; abash’d and silent I remain’d,
As conscious of my tongue’s offence, and awed
Before his presence, though my secret soul
Disdain’d the imputation. On the ground
I fix’d my eyes ; till from his airy couch
He stoop’d sublime, and touching with his hand
My dazzling forehead, “ Raise thy sight, (he cried)
And let thy sense convince thy erring tongue.”

‘ I look’d, and lo ! the former scene was changed ;
For verdant alleys and surrounding trees
A solitary prospect, wide and wild,

Rush'd on my senses. 'Twas a horrid pile
Of hills with many a shaggy forest mix'd,
With many a sable cliff and glittering stream.
Aloft, recumbent o'er the hanging ridge, [springs
The brown woods waved; while ever-trickling
Wash'd from the naked roots of oak and pine
The crumbling soil; and still at every fall
Down the steep windings of the chaunel'd rock,
Remurmuring rush'd the congregated floods
With hoarser inundation; till at last
They reach'd a grassy plain, which from the skirts
Of that high desert spread her verdant lap,
And drank the gushing moisture, where confined
In one smooth current, o'er the lilled vale
Clearer than glass it flow'd. Autumnal spoils
Luxuriant, spreading to the rays of morn,
Blush'd o'er the cliffs, whose half-encircling mound
As in a silvan theatre enclosed
That flowery level. On the river's brink
I spied a fair pavilion, which diffused
Its floating umbrage 'mid the silver shade
Of osiers. Now the western sun reveal'd
Between two parting cliffs his golden orb,
And pour'd across the shadow of the hills,
On rocks and floods, a yellow stream of light
That cheer'd the solemn scene. My listening powers
Were awed, and every thought in silence hung,
And wondering expectation. Then the voice
Of that celestial power, the mystic show
Declaring, thus my deep attention call'd :

“ Inhabitant of earth,^s to whom is given

^s The account of the economy of providence here introduced, as the most proper to calm and satisfy the mind when under the compunction of private evils, seems to

The gracious ways of Providence to learn,
 Receive my sayings with a steadfast ear—
 Know then, the Sovereign Spirit of the world,
 Though, self-collected from eternal time,

have come originally from the Pythagorean school: but of the ancient philosophers, Plato has most largely insisted upon it, has established it with all the strength of his capacious understanding, and ennobled it with all the magnificence of his divine imagination. He has one passage so full and clear on this head, that I am persuaded the reader will be pleased to see it here, though somewhat long. Addressing himself to such as are not satisfied concerning divine providence: 'The Being who presides over the whole,' (says he) 'has disposed and complicated all things for the happiness and virtue of the whole, every part of which, according to the extent of its influence, does and suffers what is fit and proper. One of these parts is yours, O unhappy man, which though in itself most inconsiderable and minute, yet being connected with the universe, ever seeks to co-operate with that supreme order. You in the meantime are ignorant of the very end for which all particular natures are brought into existence, that the all-comprehending nature of the whole may be perfect and happy; existing, as it does, not for your sake, but the cause and reason of your existence, which, as in the symmetry of every artificial work, must of necessity concur with the general design of the artist, and be subservient to the whole, of which it is a part. Your complaint therefore is ignorant and groundless; since, according to the various energy of creation, and the common laws of nature, there is a constant provision of that which is best at the same time for you and for the whole. For the governing intelligence clearly beholding all the actions of animated and self-moving creatures, and that mixture of good and evil which diversifies them, considered first of all by what disposition of things, and by what situation of each individual in the general system, vice might be depressed and subdued, and virtue made secure of victory and happiness with the greatest facility and in the highest degree possible: in this manner he

Within his own deep essence he beheld
 The bounds of true felicity complete ;
 Yet by immense benignity inclined
 To spread around him that primeval joy
 Which fill'd himself, he rais'd his plastic arm,
 And sounded through the hollow depth of space
 The strong creative mandate. Straight arose
 These heavenly orbs, the glad abodes of life
 Effusive kindled by his breath divine
 Through endless forms of being. Each inhaled
 From him its portion of the vital flame,
 In measure such, that, from the wide complex
 Of coexistent orders, one might rise,
 One order,⁹ all-involving and entire.
 He too beholding, in the sacred light
 Of his essential reason, all the shapes

ordered through the entire circle of being, the internal constitution of every mind, where should be its station in the universal fabric, and through what variety of circumstances it should proceed in the whole tenour of its existence.' He goes on in his sublime manner to assert a future state of retribution; 'as well for those who, by the exercise of good dispositions being harmonized and assimilated into the divine virtue, are consequently removed to a place of unblemished sanctity and happiness; as of those who by the most flagitious arts have risen from contemptible beginnings to the greatest affluence and power, and whom you therefore look upon as unanswerable instances of negligence in the gods, because you are ignorant of the purposes to which they are subservient, and in what manner they contribute to that supreme intention of good to the whole.' *Plato de Leg. x. 16.*

This theory has been delivered of late, especially abroad, in a manner which subverts the freedom of human actions; whereas Plato appears very careful to preserve it, and has been in that respect imitated by the best of his followers.

⁹ See the *Meditations of Antoninus*, and the *Characteristics, passim*.

Of swift contingence, all successive ties
 Of action propagated through the sum
 Of possible existence. he at once,
 Down the long series of eventful time,
 So fix'd the dates of being, so disposed
 To every living soul of every kind
 The field of motion and the hour of rest,
 That all conspired to his supreme design,
 To universal good ; with full accord
 Answering the mighty model he had chosen,
 The best and fairest¹⁰ of unnumber'd worlds
 That lay from everlasting in the store
 Of his divine conceptions. Nor content,
 By one exertion of creative power
 His goodness to reveal ; through every age,
 Through every moment up the track of time,
 His parent-hand with ever-new increase
 Of happiness and virtue has adorn'd
 The vast harmonious frame : his parent-hand,
 From the mute shell-fish gasping on the shore,
 To men, to angels, to celestial minds
 For ever leads the generations on
 To higher scenes of being ; while supplied
 From day to day with his enlivening breath,

¹⁰ This opinion is so old, that Timæus Locrus calls the Supreme Being 'δημιουργος του βελτιονος, the artificer of that which is best ;' and represents him as resolving in the beginning to produce the most excellent work, and as copying the world most exactly from his own intelligible and essential idea ; 'so that it yet remains, as it was at first, perfect in beauty, and will never stand in need of any correction or improvement.' There can be no room for a caution here, to understand the expressions, not of any particular circumstances of human life separately considered, but of the sum or universal system of life and being. See also the vision at the end of the Theodicee of Leibnitz.

Inferior orders in succession rise
To fill the void below. As flame ascends,¹¹
As bodies to their proper centre move,
As the poised ocean to the attracting moon
Obedient swells, and every headlong stream
Devolves its winding waters to the main ;
So all things which have life aspire to God,
The sun of being, boundless, unimpair'd,
Centre of souls ! Nor does the faithful voice
Of Nature cease to prompt their eager steps
Aright ; nor is the care of Heaven withheld
From granting to the task proportion'd aid ;
That in their stations all may persevere
To climb the ascent of being, and approach
For ever nearer to the life divine.—

“ That rocky pile thou seest, that verdant lawn
Fresh-water'd from the mountains. Let the scene
Paint in thy fancy the primeval seat
Of man, and where the Will Supreme ordain'd
His mansion, that pavilion fair-diffused
Along the shady brink ; in this recess
To wear the appointed season of his youth,
Till riper hours should open to his toil
The high communion of superior minds,
Of consecrated heroes and of gods.
Nor did the Sire Omnipotent forget
His tender bloom to cherish : nor withheld
Celestial footsteps from his green abode.
Oft from the radiant honours of his throne,
He sent whom most he loved, the sovereign fair,

¹¹ This opinion, though not held by Plato, nor any of the ancients, is yet a very natural consequence of his principles. But the disquisition is too complex and extensive to be entered upon here.

The effluence of his glory, whom he placed
Before his eyes for ever to behold ;
The goddess from whose inspiration flows
The toil of patriots, the delight of friends :
Without whose work divine, in heaven or earth
Naught lovely, naught propitious comes to pass,
Nor hope, nor praise, nor honour. Her the Sire
Gave it in charge to rear the blooming mind,
The folded powers to open, to direct
The growth luxuriant of his young desires,
And from the laws of this majestic world
To teach him what was good. As thus the nymph
Her daily care attended, by her side
With constant steps her gay companion stay'd,
The fair Euphrosynè, the gentle queen
Of smiles, and graceful gladness, and delights
That cheer alike the hearts of mortal men
And powers immortal. See the shining pair !
Behold, where from his dwelling now disclosed
They quit their youthful charge and seek the skies."

' I look'd, and on the flowery turf there stood
Between two radiant forms a smiling youth
Whose tender cheeks display'd the vernal flower
Of beauty ; sweetest innocence illumed
His bashful eyes, and on his polish'd brow
Sate young simplicity. With fond regard
He view'd the associates, as their steps they moved ;
'The younger chief his ardent eyes detain'd,
With mild regret invoking her return.
Bright as the star of evening she appear'd
Amid the dusky scene. Eternal youth
O'er all her form its glowing honours breathed ;
And smiles eternal from her candid eyes
Flow'd, like the dewy lustre of the morn

Effusive trembling on the placid waves.
The Spring of Heaven had shed its blushing spoils
To bind her sable tresses : full diffused
Her yellow mantle floated in the breeze ;
And in her hand she waved a living branch
Rich with immortal fruits, of power to calm
The wrathful heart, and from the brightening eyes
To chase the cloud of sadness. More sublime
The heavenly partner moved. The prime of age
Composed her steps. The presence of a god,
High on the circle of her brow enthroned,
From each majestic motion darted awe,
Devoted awe ! till, cherish'd by her looks
Benevolent and meek, confiding love
To filial rapture soften'd all the soul.
Free in her graceful hand she poised the sword
Of chaste dominion. An heroic crown
Display'd the old simplicity of pomp
Around her honour'd head. A matron's robe,
White as the sunshine streams through vernal clouds,
Her stately form invested. Hand in hand
The immortal pair forsook the enamel'd green,
Ascending slowly. Rays of limpid light [heard,
Gleam'd round their path ; celestial sounds were
And through the fragrant air ethereal dews
Distill'd around them ; till at once the clouds
Disparting wide in midway sky, withdrew
Their airy veil, and left a bright expanse
Of empyréan flame, where spent and drown'd,
Afflicted vision plunged in vain to scan
What object it involved. My feeble eyes
Endured not. Bending down to earth I stood,
With dumb attention. Soon a female voice,
As watery murmurs sweet, or warbling shades,
With sacred invocation thus began :

“ Father of gods and mortals ! whose right arm
With reins eternal guides the moving heavens,
Bend thy propitious ear. Behold well-pleased
I seek to finish thy divine decree.
With frequent steps I visit yonder seat
Of man, thy offspring : from the tender seeds
Of justice and of wisdom, to evolve
The latent honours of his generous frame ;
Till thy conducting hand shall raise his lot
From earth’s dim scene to these ethereal walks,
The temple of thy glory. But not me,
Not my directing voice he oft requires,
Or hears delighted : this enchanting maid,
The associate thou hast given me, her alone
He loves, O Father ! absent, her he craves ;
And but for her glad presence ever join’d,
Rejoices not in mine : that all my hopes
This thy benignant purpose to fulfil,
I deem uncertain : and my daily cares
Unfruitful all and vain, unless by thee
Still further aided in the work divine.”

‘ She ceased ; a voice more awful thus replied :
“ O thou ! in whom for ever I delight,
Fairer than all the inhabitants of Heaven,
Best image of thy Author ! far from thee
Be disappointment, or distaste, or blame ;
Who soon or late shalt every work fulfil,
And no resistance find. If man refuse
To hearken to thy dictates ; or, allured
By meaner joys, to any other power
Transfer the honours due to thee alone ;
That joy which he pursues he ne’er shall taste,
That power in whom delighteth ne’er behold.
Go then, once more, and happy be thy toil ;
Go then ! but let not this thy smiling friend

Partake thy footsteps. In her stead, behold !
With thee the son of Nemesis I send ;
The fiend abhorr'd ! whose vengeance takes account
Of sacred order's violated laws.
See where he calls thee, burning to be gone,
Fierce to exhaust the tempest of his wrath
On yon devoted head. But thou, my child,
Control his cruel frenzy, and protect
Thy tender charge ; that when despair shall grasp
His agonizing bosom, he may learn,
Then he may learn to love the gracious hand
Alone sufficient in the hour of ill,
To save his feeble spirit ; then confess
Thy genuine honours, O excelling fair !
When all the plagues that wait the deadly will
Of this avenging demon, all the storms
Of night infernal, serve but to display
The energy of thy superior charms
With mildest awe triumphant o'er his rage,
And shining clearer in the horrid gloom."

' Here ceased that awful voice, and soon I felt
The cloudy curtain of refreshing eve
Was closed once more, from that immortal fire
Sheltering my eye-lids. Looking up, I view'd
A vast gigantic spectre striding on
Through murmuring thunders and a waste of clouds,
With dreadful action. Black as night, his brow
Relentless frowns involved. His savage limbs
With sharp impatience violent he writhed,
As through convulsive anguish ; and his hand,
Arm'd with a scorpion-lash, full oft he raised
In madness to his bosom ; while his eyes
Rain'd bitter tears, and bellowing loud, he shook
The void with horror. Silent by his side
The virgin came. No discomposure stirr'd

Her features. From the glooms which hung around,
No stain of darkness mingled with the beam
Of her divine effulgence. Now they stoop
Upon the river-bank ; and now to hail
His wonted guests, with eager steps advanced
The unsuspecting inmate of the shade.

‘ As when a famish’d wolf, that all night long
Had ranged the Alpine snows, by chance at morn
Sees from a cliff incumbent o’er the smoke
Of some lone village, a neglected kid
That strays along the wild for herb or spring ;
Down from the winding ridge he sweeps amain,
And thinks he tears him : so with tenfold rage,
The monster sprang remorseless on his prey. . .
Amazed the stripling stood : with panting breast
Feebly he pour’d the lamentable wail
Of helpless consternation, struck at once,
And rooted to the ground. The queen beheld
His terror, and with looks of tenderest care
Advanced to save him. Soon the tyrant felt
Her awful power. His keen tempestuous arm
Hung nerveless, nor descended where his rage
Had aim’d the deadly blow : then dumb retired
With sullen rancour. Lo ! the sovereign-maid
Folds with a mother’s arms the fainting boy,
Till life rekindles in his rosy cheek ; [tongue :
Then grasps his hands, and cheers him with her
“ O wake thee, rouse thy spirit ! Shall the spite
Of yon tormentor thus appal thy heart,
While I, thy friend and guardian, am at hand
To rescue and to heal ? O let thy soul
Remember, what the will of Heaven ordains
Is ever good for all ; and if for all,
Then good for thee. Nor only by the warmth
And soothing sunshine of delightful things,

Do minds grow up and flourish. Oft misled
By that bland light the young unpractised views
Of reason wander, through a fatal road,
Far from their native aim ; as if to lie
Inglorious in the fragrant shade, and wait
The soft access of ever-circling joys,
Were all the end of being. Ask thyself,
This pleasing error—did it never lull
Thy wishes ? Has thy constant heart refused
The silken fetters of delicious ease ?
Or when divine Euphrosynè appear'd
Within this dwelling, did not thy desires
Hang far below the measure of thy fate,
Which I reveal'd before thee ? and thy eyes
Impatient of my counsels, turn away
To drink the soft effusion of her smiles ?
Know then, for this the everlasting Sire
Deprives thee of her presence ; and instead,
O wise and still benevolent ! ordains
This horrid visage hither to pursue
My steps ; that so thy nature may discern
Its real good, and what alone can save
Thy feeble spirit in this hour of ill
From folly and despair. O yet beloved !
Let not this headlong terror quite o'erwhelm
Thy scatter'd powers ; nor fatal deem the rage
Of this tormentor, nor his proud assault,
While I am here to vindicate thy toil,
Above the generous question of thy arm.
Brave by thy fears and in thy weakness strong,
'This hour he triumphs : but confront his might,
And dare him to the combat, then with ease
Disarm'd and quell'd, his fierceness he resigns
To bondage and to scorn : while thus inured
By watchful danger, by unceasing toil,

The immortal mind, superior to his fate,
Amid the outrage of external things,
Firm as the solid base of this great world,
Rests on his own foundations. Blow, ye winds!
Ye waves! ye thunders! roll your tempest on;
Shake, ye old pillars of the marble sky!
Till all its orbs and all its worlds of fire
Be loosen'd from their seats; yet still serene,
The unconquer'd mind looks down upon the wreck;
And ever stronger as the storms advance,
Firm through the closing ruin holds his way,
Where Nature calls him to the destined goal."

' So spake the goddess; while through all her frame
Celestial raptures flow'd, in every word,
In every motion, kindling warmth divine
To seize who listen'd. Vehement and swift
As lightning fires the aromatic shade
In Æthiopian fields, the stripling felt
Her inspiration catch his fervid soul,
And starting from his languor thus exclaim'd :

" Then let the trial come! and witness thou,
If terror be upon me; if I shrink
To meet the storm, or falter in my strength
When hardest it besets me. Do not think
That I am fearful and infirm of soul,
As late thy eyes beheld: for thou hast changed
My nature; thy commanding voice has waked
My languid powers to bear me boldly on,
Where'er the will divine my path ordains
Through toil or peril: only do not thou
Forsake me; O be thou for ever near,
That I may listen to thy sacred voice,
And guide by thy decrees my constant feet.
But say, for ever are my eyes bereft?
Say, shall the fair Euphrasynè not once

Appear again to charm me ? Thou, in heaven,
O thou eternal Arbitrer of things !
Be thy great bidding done : for who am I,
To question thy appointment ? Let the frowns
Of this avenger every morn o'ercast
The cheerful dawn, and every evening damp
With double night my dwelling ; I will learn
To hail them both, and unrepining bear
His hateful presence : but permit my tongue
One glad request, and if my deeds may find
Thy awful eye propitious, O restore
The rosy-featured maid ; again to cheer
This lonely seat, and bless me with her smiles."

'He spoke ; when instant through the sable glooms
With which that furious presence had involved
The ambient air, a flood of radiance came
Swift as the lightning flash ; the melting clouds
Flew diverse, and amid the blue serene
Euphrosynè appear'd. With sprightly step
The nymph alighted on the irriguous lawn,
And to her wondering audience thus began :

" Lo ! I am here to answer to your vows,
And be the meeting fortunate ! I come
With joyful tidings ; we shall part no more—
Hark ! how the gentle echo from her cell [stream
Talks through the cliffs, and murmuring o'er the
Repeats the accents ; we shall part no more.—
O my delightful friends ! well-pleased on high
The Father has beheld you, while the might
Of that stern foe with bitter trial proved
Your equal doings ; then for ever spake
The high decree : that thou, celestial maid !
Howe'er that grisly phantom on thy steps
May sometimes dare intrude, yet never more

Shalt thou, descending to the abode of man,
Alone endure the rancour of his arm,
Or leave thy loved Euphrosynè behind."

'She ended; and the whole romantic scene
Immediate vanish'd; rocks, and woods, and rills,
The mantling tent, and each mysterious form,
Flew like the pictures of a morning dream,
When sunshine fills the bed. Awhile I stood
Perplex'd and giddy; till the radiant power
Who bade the visionary landscape rise,
As up to him I turn'd, with gentlest looks.
Preventing my inquiry, thus began:


"There let thy soul acknowledge its complaint
How blind, how impious! There behold the ways
Of Heaven's eternal destiny to man,
For ever just, benevolent, and wise:
That Virtue's awful steps, howe'er pursued
By vexing fortune and intrusive pain,
Should never be divided from her chaste,
Her fair attendant, Pleasure. Need I urge
Thy tardy thought through all the various round
Of this existence, that thy softening soul
At length may learn what energy the hand
Of virtue mingles in the bitter tide
Of passion swelling with distress and pain,
To mitigate the sharp with gracious drops
Of cordial pleasure? Ask the faithful youth,
Why the cold urn of her whom long he loved
So often fills his arms; so often draws
His lonely footsteps at the silent hour,
To pay the mournful tribute of his tears;
O! he will tell thee, that the wealth of worlds
Should ne'er seduce his bosom to forego
That sacred hour, when, stealing from the noise

Of care and envy, sweet remembrance soothes
With virtue's kindest looks his aching breast,
And turns his tears to rapture.—Ask the crowd
Which flies impatient from the village-walk
To climb the neighbouring cliffs, when far below
The cruel winds have hurl'd upon the coast
Some helpless bark ; while sacred Pity melts
The general eye, or Terror's icy hand
Smites their distorted limbs and horrent hair ;
While every mother closer to her breast
Catches her child, and pointing where the waves
Foam through the shatter'd vessel, shrieks aloud
As one poor wretch that spreads his piteous arms
For succour, swallow'd by the roaring surge,
As now another, dash'd against the rock,
Drops lifeless down : O ! deemest thou indeed
No kind endearment here by Nature given
To mutual terror and compassion's tears ?
No sweetly-melting softness which attracts,
O'er all that edge of pain, the social powers
To this their proper action and their end ?
—Ask thy own heart ; when at the midnight hour
Slow through that studious gloom thy pausing eye
Led by the glimmering taper moves around
The sacred volumes of the dead, the songs
Of Grecian bards, and records writ by Fame
For Grecian heroes, where the present power
Of heaven and earth surveys the immortal page,
Ev'n as a father blessing, while he reads
The praises of his son. If then thy soul,
Spurning the yoke of these inglorious days,
Mix in their deeds, and kindle with their flame ;
Say, when the prospect blackens on thy view,
When rooted from the base, heroic states

Moan in the dust, and tremble at the frown
Of cursed ambition ; when the pious band
Of youths who fought for freedom and their sires,
Lie side by side in gore ; when ruffian-pride
Usurps the throne of justice, turns the pomp
Of public power, the majesty of rule,
The sword, the laurel, and the purple robe,
To slavish empty pageants, to adorn
A tyrant's walk, and glitter in the eyes
Of such as bow the knee ; when honour'd urns
Of patriots and of chiefs, the awful bust
And storied arch, to glut the coward-rage
Of regal envy, strew the public way
With hallow'd ruins ; when the Muse's haunt,
The marble porch where Wisdom went to talk
With Socrates or Tully, hears no more,
Save the hoarse jargon of contentious monks,
Or female Superstition's midnight prayer ;
When ruthless Rapine from the hand of Time
Tears the destroying scythe, with surer blow
To sweep the works of glory from their base ;
Till Desolation o'er the grass-grown street
Expands his raven wings, and up the wall,
Where senates once the price of monarchs doom'd,
Hisses the gliding snake through hoary weeds
That clasp the mouldering column ; thus defaced,
Thus widely mournful, when the prospect thrills
Thy beating bosom, when the patriot's tear
Starts from thine eye, and thy extended arm
In fancy hurls the thunderbolt of Jove
To fire the impious wreath on Philip's ¹² brow,
Or dash Octavius from the trophied car ;

¹² The Macedonian.

Say, does thy secret soul repine to taste
The big distress ? Or wouldst thou then exchange
Those heart-eunobling sorrows for the lot
Of him who sits amid the gaudy herd
Of mute barbarians bending to his nod,
And bears aloft his gold-invested front,
And says within himself, ' I am a king ;
And wherefore should the clamorous voice of woe
Intrude upon mine ear ? '—The baleful dregs
Of these late ages, this inglorious draught
Of servitude and folly, have not yet
(Bless'd be the eternal Ruler of the world !)
Defiled to such a depth of sordid shame
The native honours of the human soul,
Nor so effaced the image of its Sire."





**THE
PLEASURES
OF
IMAGINATION.**

BOOK THE THIRD.


ARGUMENT.

Pleasure in observing the tempers and manners of men, even where vicious or absurd. The origin of Vice, from false representations of the fancy, producing false opinions concerning good and evil. Inquiry into Ridicule. The general sources of ridicule in the minds and characters of men, enumerated. Final cause of the source of ridicule. The resemblance of certain aspects of inanimate things to the sensations and properties of the mind. The operations of the mind in the production of the works of Imagination, described. The secondary pleasure from imitation. The benevolent order of the world illustrated in the arbitrary connexion of these pleasures with the objects which excite them. The nature and conduct of Taste. Concluding with an account of the natural and moral advantages resulting from a sensible and well-formed Imagination.

THE
PLEASURES
OF
IMAGINATION.

BOOK III.

WHAT wonder therefore, since the endearing ties
Of passion link the universal kind
Of man so close ; what wonder, if to search
This common nature through the various change
Of sex, and age, and fortune, and the frame
Of each peculiar, draw the busy mind
With unresisted charms ? The spacious west,
And all the teeming regions of the south,
Hold not a quarry, to the curious flight
Of Knowledge, half so tempting or so fair,
As man to man. Nor only where the smiles
Of Love invite ; nor only where the applause
Of cordial Honour turns the attentive eye
On Virtue's graceful deeds. For since the course
Of things external acts in different ways
On human apprehensions, as the hand
Of Nature temper'd to a different frame



Peculiar minds ; so haply where the powers
Of Fancy¹ neither lessen nor enlarge

¹ The influence of the Imagination on the conduct of life, is one of the most important points in moral philosophy. It were easy by an induction of facts to prove that the Imagination directs almost all the passions, and mixes with almost every circumstance of action or pleasure. Let any man, even of the coldest head and soberest industry, analyse the idea of what he calls his interest ; he will find that it consists chiefly of certain degrees of decency, beauty, and order, variously combined into one system, the idol which he seeks to enjoy by labour, hazard, and self-denial. It is on this account, of the last consequence to regulate these images by the standard of Nature and the general good ; otherwise the Imagination, by heightening some objects beyond their real excellence and beauty, or by representing others in a more odious or terrible shape than they deserve, may of course engage us in pursuits utterly inconsistent with the moral order of things.

If it be objected that this account of things supposes the passions to be merely accidental, whereas there appears in some a natural and hereditary disposition to certain passions prior to all circumstances of education or fortune ; it may be answered, that though no man is born ambitious or a miser, yet he may inherit from his parents a peculiar temper or complexion of mind which shall render his Imagination more liable to be struck with some particular objects, consequently dispose him to form opinions of good and ill, and entertain passions of a particular turn. Some men, for instance, by the original frame of their minds, are more delighted with the vast and magnificent, others on the contrary with the elegant and gentle aspects of nature. And it is very remarkable, that the disposition of the moral powers is always similar to this of the Imagination ; that those who are most inclined to admire prodigious and sublime objects in the physical world, are also most inclined to applaud examples of fortitude and heroic virtue in the moral : while those who are charmed rather with the delicacy and sweetness of colours, and forms, and sounds, never fail in like manner to yield the preference to the softer

The images of things, but paint in all
 Their genuine hues, the features which they wore
 In Nature,—there opinion will be true,
 And action right. For action treads the path
 In which Opinion says he follows good,
 Or flies from evil; and Opinion gives
 Report of good or evil, as the scene
 Was drawn by Fancy, lovely or deform'd :
 Thus her report can never there be true
 Where Fancy cheats the intellectual eye
 With glaring colours and distorted lines.
 Is there a man, who at the sound of death
 Sees ghastly shapes of terror conjured up,
 And black before him ; naught but death-bed groans
 And fearful prayers, and plunging from the brink
 Of light and being, down the gloomy air,
 An unknown depth ? Alas ! in such a mind,

scenes of virtue and the sympathies of a domestic life. And this is sufficient to account for the objection.

Among the ancient philosophers, though we have several hints concerning this influence of the Imagination upon morals among the remains of the Socratic school, yet the Stoics were the first who paid it a due attention. Zeno, their founder, thought it impossible to preserve any tolerable regularity in life, without frequently inspecting those pictures or appearances of things, which the imagination offers to the mind. (Diog. Laert. l. vii.) The meditations of M. Aurelius, and the discourses of Epictetus, are full of the same sentiment; insomuch that the latter makes the *Χρησις οία δε φαντασιων*, or right management of the fancies, the only thing for which we are accountable to Providence, and without which a man is no other than stupid or frantic. Arrian. l. i. c. 12. and l. ii. c. 22. See also the Characteristics, vol. i. from p. 313 to 321, where this Stoical doctrine is embellished with all the elegance and graces of Plato.

If no bright forms of excellence attend
The image of his country; nor the pomp
Of sacred senates, nor the guardian voice
Of Justice on her throne, nor aught that wakes
The conscious bosom with a patriot's flame;
Will not Opinion tell him, that to die,
Or stand the hazard, is a greater ill
Than to betray his country? And in act
Will he not choose to be a wretch and live?
Here vice begins then. From the enchanting cup
Which Fancy holds to all, the unwary thirst
Of youth oft swallows a Circæan draught,
That sheds a baleful tincture o'er the eye
Of Reason, till no longer he discerns,
And only guides to err. Then revel forth
A furious band that spurns him from the throne;
And all is uproar. Thus Ambition grasps
The empire of the soul; thus pale Revenge
Unsheathes her murderous dagger; and the hands
Of Lust and Rapine, with unholy arts,
Watch to o'erturn the barrier of the laws
That keeps them from their prey: thus all the
 plagues
The wicked bear, or o'er the trembling scene
The tragic Muse discloses, under shapes
Of honour, safety, pleasure, ease, or pomp,
Stole first into the mind. Yet not by all
Those lying forms which Fancy in the brain
Engenders, are the kindling passions driven
To guilty deeds; nor Reason bound in chains,
That Vice alone may lord it: oft adorn'd
With solemn pageants, Folly mounts the throne,
And plays her idiot-antics, like a queen.
A thousand garbs she wears; a thousand ways
She wheels her giddy empire.—Lo! thus far

With bold adventure, to the Mantuan lyre
 I sing of Nature's charms, and touch well-pleased
 A stricter note ; now haply must my song
 Unbend her serious measure, and reveal,
 In lighter strains, how Folly's awkward arts^a
 Excite impetuous Laughter's gay rebuke ;
 The sportive province of the comic Muse.

See ! in what crowds the uncouth forms advance :
 Each would outstrip the other, each prevent
 Our careful search, and offer to your gaze,
 Unask'd, his motley features. Wait awhile,
 My curious friends ! and let us first arrange
 In proper order your promiscuous throng.

Behold the foremost band³, of slender thought,
 And easy faith ; whom flattering Fancy soothes
 With lying spectres, in themselves to view
 Illustrious forms of excellence and good,
 That scorn the mansion. With exulting hearts
 They spread their spurious treasures to the sun,
 And bid the world admire ! but chief the glance
 Of wishful envy draws their joy-bright eyes,
 And lifts with self-applause each lordly brow.
 In number boundless as the blooms of Spring,

^a Notwithstanding the general influence of Ridicule on private and civil life, as well as on learning and the sciences, it has been almost constantly neglected or misrepresented, by divines especially. The manner of treating these subjects in the science of human nature, should be precisely the same as in natural philosophy ; from particular facts to investigate the stated order in which they appear, and then apply the general law, thus discovered, to the explication of other appearances and the improvement of useful arts.

³ The first and most general source of ridicule in the characters of men, is vanity, or self-applause for some desirable quality or possession which evidently does not belong to those who assume it.

Behold their glaring idols, empty shades
By faucy gilded o'er, and then set up
For adoration. Some in Learning's garb,
With formal baud, and sable-cinctured gown,
And rags of mouldy volumes. Some elate
With martial splendour, steely pikes and swords
Of costly frame, and gay Phœnician robes
Inwrought with flowery gold, assume the port
Of stately valour: listening by his side
There stands a female form; to her, with looks
Of earnest import, pregnant with amaze,
He talks of deadly deeds, of breaches, storms,
And sulphurous mines, and ambush; then at once
Breaks off, and smiles to see her look so pale,
And asks some wondering question of her fears.
Others of graver-mien, behold, adorn'd
With holy ensigns, how sublime they move,
And bending oft their sanctimonious eyes,
Take homage of the simple-minded throng;
Ambassadors of Heaven! Nor much unlike
Is he, whose visage, in the lazy mist
That mantles every feature, hides a brood
Of politic conceits; of whispers, nods,
And hints deep-omen'd with unwieldy schemes,
And dark portents of state. Ten thousand more,
Prodigious habits and tumultuous tongues,
Pour dauntless in and swell the boastful band.

Then comes the second order⁴; all who seek
The debt of praise, where watchful Unbelief
Darts through the thiu pretence her squinting eye

4 Ridicule from the same vanity, where, though the possession be real, yet no merit can arise from it, because of some particular circumstances, which, though obvious to the spectator, are yet overlooked by the ridiculous character.

On some retired appearance which belies
The boasted virtue, of annuls the applause
That Justice else would pay. Here side by side
I see two leaders of the solemn train
Approaching: one a female old and gray,
With eyes demure, and wrinkle-furrow'd brow,
Pale as the cheeks of death; yet still she stuns
The sickening audience with a nauseous tale;
How many youths her myrtle chains have worn,
How many virgins at her triumphs pined!
Yet how resolved she guards her cautious heart;
Such is her terror at the risks of love,
And man's seducing tongue! The other seems
A bearded sage, ungentle in his mien,
And sordid all his habit; peevish Want
Grips at his heels, while down the gazing throng
He stalks, resounding in magnificent phrase
The vanity of riches, the contempt
Of pomp and power. Be prudent in your zeal,
Ye grave associates! let the silent grace
Of her who blushes at the fond regard
Her charms inspire, more eloquent unfold
The praise of spotless honour: let the man
Whose eye regards not his illustrious pomp
And ample store, but as indulgent streams
To cheer the barren soil and spread the fruits
Of joy,—let him by juster measures fix
The price of riches and the end of power.

Another tribe succeeds⁵; deluded long
By Fancy's dazzling optics, these behold
The images of some peculiar things
With brighter hues resplendent, and portray'd

⁵ Ridicule from a notion of excellence in particular objects disproportioned to their intrinsic value, and inconsistent with the order of nature.

With features nobler far than e'er adorn'd
Their genuine objects. Hence the fever'd heart
Pants with delirious hope for tinsel charms ;
Hence oft obtrusive on the eye of Scorn,
Untimely Zeal her witless pride betrays ;
And serious Manhood, from the towering aim
Of Wisdom, stoops to emulate the boast
Of childish Toil. Behold yon mystic form,
Bedeck'd with feathers, insects, weeds, and shells !
Not with intenser view the Samian sage
Bent his fix'd eye on heaven's intenser fires,
When first the order of that radiant scene
Swell'd his exulting thought, than this surveys
A muckworm's entrails or a spider's fang.
Next him a youth, with flowers and myrtles crown'd,
Attends that virgin-form, and blushing kneels,
With fondest gesture and a suppliant's tongue,
To win her coy regard: adieu, for him,
The dull engagements of the bustling world !
Adieu the sick impertinence of praise,
And hope, and action ! for with her alone,
By streams and shades, to steal these sighing hours,
Is all he asks, and all that fate can give !
Thee too, facetious Momion, wandering here,
Thee, dreaded censor ! oft have I beheld
Bewilder'd unawares : alas ! too long
Flush'd with thy comic triumphs, and the spoils
Of sly derision ! till on every side
Hurling thy random bolts, offended Truth
Assign'd thee here thy station with the slaves
Of Folly. Thy once formidable name
Shall grace her humble records, and be heard
In scoffs and mockery bandied from the lips
Of all the vengeful brotherhood around,
So oft the patient victims of thy scorn.

But now, ye gay ! to whom indulgent fate,
 Of all the Muse's empire hath assign'd
 The fields of folly⁶, hither each advance
 Your sickles ; here the teeming soil affords
 Its richest growth. A favourite brood appears,
 In whom the demon, with a mother's joy,
 Views all her charms reflected, all her cares
 At full repay'd. Ye most illustrious band !
 Who, scorning Reason's tame, pedantic rules,
 And Order's vulgar bondage, (never meant
 For souls sublime as yours) with generous zeal
 Pay Vice the reverence Virtue long usurp'd,
 And yield Deformity the fond applause
 Which Beauty wont to claim ; forgive my song,
 That for the blushing diffidence of youth,
 It shuns the unequal province of your praise.

Thus far triumphant⁷ in the pleasing guile
 Of bland Imagination, Folly's train
 Have dared our search : but now a dastard-kind
 Advance reluctant, and with faltering feet
 Shrink from the gazer's eye ; enfeebled hearts,
 Whom Fancy chills with visionary fears,
 Or bends to servile tameness with conceits
 Of shame, of evil, or of base defect,
 Fantastic and delusive. Here the slave
 Who droops abash'd when sullen Pomp surveys
 His humbler habit ; here the trembling wretch
 Unnerved and struck with Terror's icy bolts,
 Spent in weak wailings, drown'd in shameful tears,
 At every dream of danger : here subdued

⁶ Ridicule from a notion of excellence, when the object is absolutely odious or contemptible. This is the highest degree of the ridiculous ; as in the affectation of diseases or vices.

⁷ Ridicule from false shame or groundless fear.

By frontless laughter and the hardy scorn
 Of old unfeeling vice, the abject soul,
 Who blushing half resigns the candid praise
 Of Temperance and Honour ; half disowns
 A freeman's hatred of tyrannic pride ;
 And hears with sickly smiles the venal mouth
 With foulest licence mock the patriot's name

 Last of the motley bands⁸ on whom the power
 Of gay Derision bends her hostile aim,
 Is that where shameful Ignorance presides.
 Beneath her sordid banners, lo ! they march, [hands
 Like blind and lame. Whate'er their doubtful
 Attempt, Confusion straight appears behind,
 And troubles all the work. Through many a maze
 Perplex'd they struggle, changing every path,
 O'erturning every purpose; then at last
 Sit down dismay'd, and leave the entangled scene
 For Scorn to sport with. Such then is the abode
 Of Folly in the mind ; and such the shapes
 In which she governs her obsequious train.

Through every scene of ridicule in things
 To lead the tenor of my devious lay ;
 Through every swift occasion, which the hand
 Of Laughter points at, when the mirthful sting
 Distends her sallying nerves and chokes her tongue ;
 What were it but to count each crystal drop
 Which Morning's dewy fingers on the blooms
 Of May distil ? Suffice it to have said⁹,

⁸ Ridicule from the ignorance of such things as our circumstances require us to know.

⁹ By comparing these general sources of ridicule with each other, and examining the ridiculous in other objects, we may obtain a general definition of it equally applicable to every species. The most important circumstance of this definition is laid down in the lines referred to; but others more minute we shall subjoin here. Aristotle's account of

Where'er the power of Ridicule displays
Her quaint-eyed visage, some incongruous form,

the matter seems both imperfect and false: το γαρ γελοῖον, says he, ἐστὶν ἀμαρτήμα τι καὶ αἰσχρὸς, ἀνωδυνὸν καὶ ὠφθαλμικόν: 'the ridiculous is some certain fault or turpitude without pain, and not destructive to his subject.' (Poet. c. 5.) For allowing it to be true, as it is not, that the ridiculous is never accompanied with pain, yet we might produce many instances of such a fault or turpitude which cannot with any tolerable propriety be called ridiculous. So that the definition does not distinguish the thing designed. Nay further; even when we perceive the turpitude tending to the destruction of its subject, we may still be sensible of a ridiculous appearance, till the ruin become imminent, and the keener sensations of pity or terror banish the ludicrous apprehension from our minds. For the sensation of ridicule is not a bare perception of the agreement or disagreement of ideas, but a passion or emotion of the mind consequential to that perception. So that the mind may perceive the agreement or disagreement, and yet not feel the ridiculous, because it is engrossed by a more violent emotion. Thus it happens that some men think those objects ridiculous, to which others cannot endure to apply the name; because in them they excite a much intenser and more important feeling. And this difference, among other causes, has brought a good deal of confusion into this question.

That which makes objects ridiculous, is some ground of admiration or esteem connected with other more general circumstances comparatively worthless or deformed; or it is some circumstance of turpitude or deformity connected with what is in general excellent or beautiful: the inconsistent properties existing either in the objects themselves; or in the apprehension of the person to whom they relate; belonging always to the same order or class of being; implying sentiment or design; and exciting no acute or vehement emotion of the heart.

To prove the several parts of this definition: the appearance of excellence or beauty, connected with a general condition comparatively sordid or deformed, is ridiculous: for instance, pompous pretensions of wisdom joined with igno-

Some stubborn dissonance of things combined,
 Strikes on the quick observer : whether Pomp,
 Or Praise, or Beauty, mix their partial claim,
 Where sordid fashions, where ignoble deeds,
 Where foul Deformity are wont to dwell ;
 Or whether these with violation loathed,

rance or folly, in the Socrates of Aristophanes ; and the ostentations of military glory with cowardice and stupidity, in the Thraso of Terence.

The appearance of deformity or turpitude, in conjunction with what is in general excellent or venerable, is also ridiculous : for instance, the personal weaknesses of a magistrate appearing in the solemn and public functions of his station.

The incongruous properties may either exist in the objects themselves, or in the apprehension of the person to whom they relate : in the last-mentioned instance, they both exist in the objects ; in the instances from Aristophanes and Terence, one of them is objective and real, the other only founded in the apprehension of the ridiculous character.

The inconsistent properties must belong to the same order or class of being. A coxcomb in fine clothes, bedaubed by accident in foul weather, is a ridiculous object, because his general apprehension of excellence and esteem is referred to the splendour and expense of his dress. A man of sense and merit, in the same circumstances, is not counted ridiculous, because the general ground of excellence and esteem in him is, both in fact and in his own apprehension, of a very different species.

Every ridiculous object implies sentiment or design. A column placed by an architect without a capital or base, is laughed at : the same column in a ruin causes a very different sensation.

And lastly, the occurrence must excite no acute or vehement emotion of the heart, such as terror, pity, or indignation ; for in that case, as was observed above, the mind is not at leisure to contemplate the ridiculous.

Whether any appearance not ridiculous be involved in this description, and whether it comprehend every species

Invade resplendent Pomp's imperious mien,
The charms of Beauty, or the boast of Praise.

Ask we for what fair end ¹⁰, the Almighty Sire

and form of the ridiculous, must be determined by repeated applications of it to particular instances.

¹⁰ Since it is beyond all contradiction evident that we have a natural sense or feeling of the ridiculous, and since so good a reason may be assigned to justify the Supreme Being for bestowing it; one cannot without astonishment reflect on the conduct of those men who imagine it is for the service of true religion to vilify and blacken it without distinction, and endeavour to persuade us that it is never applied but in a bad cause. Ridicule is not concerned with mere speculative truth or falsehood. It is not in abstract propositions or theorems, but in actions and passions, good and evil, beauty and deformity, that we find materials for it; and all these terms are relative, implying approbation or blame. To ask them whether 'Ridicule be a test of truth,' is in other words, to ask whether that which is ridiculous can be morally true, can be just and becoming; or whether that which is just and becoming can be ridiculous; a question that does not deserve a serious answer. For it is most evident, that, as in a metaphysical proposition offered to the understanding for its assent, the faculty of reason examines the terms of the proposition, and finding one idea, which was supposed equal to another, to be in fact unequal, of consequence rejects the proposition as a falsehood; so, in objects offered to the mind for its esteem or applause, the faculty of ridicule, finding an incongruity in the claim, urges the mind to reject it with laughter and contempt. When therefore we observe such a claim obtruded upon mankind, and the inconsistent circumstances carefully concealed from the eye of the public; it is our business, if the matter be of importance to society, to drag out those latent circumstances, and, by setting them in full view, to convince the world how ridiculous the claim is: and thus a double advantage is gained; for we both detect the moral falsehood sooner than in the way of speculative inquiry, and impress the minds of men with a

In mortal bosoms wakes this gay contempt,
These grateful stings of laughter, from disgust
Educing pleasure ? Wherefore, but to aid
The tardy steps of Reason, and at once
By this prompt impulse urge us to depress
The giddy aims of Folly ? Though the light
Of Truth slow-dawning on the inquiring mind,
At length unfolds, through many a subtile tie,
How these uncouth disorders end at last
In public evil ; yet benignant Heaven,

stronger sense of the vanity and error of its authors. And this and no more is meant by the application of ridicule.

But it is said, the practice is dangerous, and may be inconsistent with the regard we owe to objects of real dignity and excellence. I answer, the practice fairly managed can never be dangerous : men may be dishonest in obtruding circumstances foreign to the object, and we may be inadvertent in allowing those circumstances to impose upon us : but the sense of ridicule always judges right. The Socrates of Aristophanes is as truly ridiculous a character as ever was drawn :—True ; but it is not the character of Socrates, the divine moralist and father of ancient wisdom. What then ? did the ridicule of the poet hinder the philosopher from detecting and disclaiming those foreign circumstances which he had falsely introduced into his character, and thus rendered the satirist doubly ridiculous in his turn ? No ; but it nevertheless had an ill influence on the minds of the people. And so has the reasoning of Spinoza made many atheists : he has founded it indeed on suppositions utterly false ; but allow him these, and his conclusions are unavoidably true. And if we must reject the use of ridicule, because, by the imposition of false circumstances, things may be made to seem ridiculous, which are not so in themselves ; why we ought not in the same manner to reject the use of reason, because, by proceeding on false principles, conclusions will appear true, which are impossible in nature, let the vehement and obstinate declaimers against ridicule determine.

Conscious how dim the dawn of Truth appears
To thousands; conscious what a scanty pause
From labours and from care, the wider lot
Of humble life affords for studious thought
To scan the maze of Nature; therefore stamp'd
The glaring scenes with characters of scorn,
As broad, as obvious to the passing clown,
As to the letter'd sage's curious eye.

Such are the various aspects of the mind.
Some heavenly Genius, whose unclouded thoughts
Attain that secret harmony which blends
The ethereal spirit with its mould of clay;
O teach me to reveal the grateful charm
That searchless Nature o'er the sense of man
Diffuses, to behold, in lifeless things,
The inexpressive semblance of himself¹¹,
Of thought and passion. Mark the sable woods
That shade sublime yon mountain's nodding brow;
With what religious awe the solemn scene
Commands your steps! as if the reverend form
Of Minos or of Numa should forsake
The Elysian seats, and down the embowering glade
Move to your pausing eye! Behold the expanse
Of yon gay landscape, where the silver clouds
Flit o'er the heavens before the sprightly breeze:
Now their gray cincture skirts the doubtful sun;
Now streams of splendour, through their opening veil
Effulgent, sweep from off the gilded lawn
The ærial shadows; on the curling brook,
And on the shady margin's quivering leaves,
With quickest lustre glancing: while you view
The prospect, say, within your cheerful breast

¹¹ This similitude is the foundation of almost all the ornaments of poetic diction.

Plays not the lively sense of winning mirth
With clouds and sunshine chequer'd, while the round
Of social converse, to the inspiring tongue
Of some gay nymph amid her subject-train,
Moves all obsequious? Whence is this effect,
This kindred power of such discordant things?
Or flows their semblance from that mystic tone
To which the new-born mind's harmonious powers
At first were strung? or rather from the links
Which artful custom twines around her frame?

For when the different images of things,
By chance combined, have struck the attentive soul
With deeper impulse, or connected long,
Have drawn her frequent eye; howe'er distinct
The external scenes, yet oft the ideas gain
From that conjunction an eternal tie,
And sympathy unbroken. Let the mind
Recal one partner of the various league,
Immediate, lo! the firm confederates rise,
And each his former station straight resumes:
One movement governs the consenting throng,
And all at once with rosy pleasure shine,
Or all are sadden'd with the glooms of care.
'Twas thus, if ancient fame the truth unfold,
Two faithful needles¹², from the informing touch
Of the same parent-stone, together drew
Its mystic virtue, and at first conspired
With fatal impulse quivering to the pole;
Then, though disjoint'd by kingdoms, though the main
Roll'd its broad surge betwixt, and different stars
Beheld their wakeful motions, yet preserved

¹² See the elegant poem recited by Cardinal Bembo in the character of Lucretius; *Strada, Prolus. vi. Academ. 2. c. v.*

The former friendship, and remember'd still
The alliance of their birth : whate'er the line
Which one possess'd, nor pause nor quiet knew
The sure associate, ere with trembling speed
He found its path, and fix'd unerring there.
Such is the secret union, when we feel
A song, a flower, a name, at once restore
Those long connected scenes where first they moved
The attention ; backward through her mazy walks
Guiding the wanton fancy to her scope,
To temples, courts, or fields, with all the band
Of painted forms, of passions and designs,
Attendant : whence, if pleasing in itself,
The prospect from that sweet accession gains
Redoubled influence o'er the listening mind.

By these mysterious ties ¹³, the busy power
Of Memory her ideal train preserves
Entire ; or when they would elude her watch,
Reclaims their fleeting footsteps from the waste
Of dark oblivion ; thus collecting all
The various forms of being to present,
Before the curious aim of mimic art,
Their largest choice ; like Spring's unfolded blooms
Exhaling sweetness, that the skilful bee
May taste at will, from their selected spoils
To work her dulcet food. For not the expanse
Of living lakes, in summer's noontide calm,
Reflects the bordering shade, and sun-bright heavens,
With fairer semblance ; not the sculptured gold
More faithful keeps the graver's lively trace ;
Than he whose birth the sister-powers of art
Propitious view'd, and from his genial star
Shed influence to the seeds of fancy kind ;

¹³ The act of remembering seems almost wholly to depend on the association of ideas.

'Than his attemper'd bosom must preserve
The seal of Nature. There alone unchanged
Her form remains. The balmy walks of May
There breathe perennial sweets : the trembling
Resounds for ever in the abstracted ear, [chord
Melodious : and the virgin's radiant eye,
Superior to disease, to grief, and time,
Shines with unbating lustre. Thus at length
Endow'd with all that nature can bestow,
The child of Fancy oft in silence bends
O'er these mix'd treasures of his pregnant breast,
With conscious pride. From them he oft resolves
To frame he knows not what excelling things,
And win he knows not what sublime reward
Of praise and wonder. By degrees, the mind
Feels her young nerves dilate : the plastic powers
Labour for action : blind emotions heave
His bosom ; and with loveliest frenzy caught,
From earth to heaven he rolls his daring eye,
From heaven to earth. Anon ten thousand shapes,
Like spectres trooping to the wizard's call,
Flit swift before him. From the womb of earth,
From ocean's bed they come : the eternal heavens
Disclose their splendours, and the dark abyss
Pours out her births unknown. With fixed gaze
He marks the rising phantoms ; now compares
Their different forms ; now blends them, now di-
Enlarges and extenuates by turns ; [vides,
Opposes, ranges in fantastic bands,
And infinitely varies ; hither now,
Now thither fluctuates his inconstant aim,
With endless choice perplex'd. At length his plan
Begins to open. Lucid order dawns ;
And as from Chaos old the jarring seeds
Of Nature at the voice divine repair'd

Each to its place, till rosy earth unveil'd
 Her fragrant bosom, and the joyful sun
 Sprang up the blue serene ; by swift degrees
 Thus disentangled, his entire design
 Emerges. Colours mingle, features join,
 And lines converge : the fainter parts retire ;
 The fairer eminent in light advance ;
 And every image on its neighbour smiles.
 Awhile he stands, and with a father's joy
 Contemplates. Then with Promethéan art,
 Into its proper vehicle¹⁴ he breathes
 The fair conception ; which, embodied thus,
 And permanent, becomes to eyes or ears
 An object ascertain'd : while thus inform'd,
 The various organs of his mimic skill,
 The consonance of sounds, the featured rock,
 The shadowy picture and impassion'd verse,
 Beyond their proper powers attract the soul
 By that expressive semblance, while in sight
 Of Nature's great original we scan
 The lively child of Art ; while line by line,
 And feature after feature we refer
 To that sublime exemplar whence it stole
 Those animating charms. Thus beauty's palm
 Betwixt them wavering hangs : applauding Love
 Doubts where to choose ; and mortal man aspires
 To tempt creative praise. As when a cloud
 Of gathering hail with limpid crusts of ice
 Enclosed and obvious to the beaming sun,
 Collects his large effulgence ; straight the heavens

¹⁴ This relates to the different sorts of corporeal mediums, by which the ideas of the artists are rendered palpable to the senses ; as by sounds in music, by lines and shadows in painting, by diction in poetry, &c.

With equal flames present on either hand
The radiant visage : Persia stands at gaze,
Appall'd ; and on the brink of Ganges doubts
The snowy-vested seer, in Mithra's name,
To which the fragrance of the south shall burn,
To which his warbled orisons ascend.

Such various bliss the well-tuned heart enjoys,
Favour'd of Heaven ! while plunged in sordid cares,
The unfeeling vulgar mocks the boon divine :
And harsh Austerity, from whose rebuke
Young Love and smiling Wonder shrink away
Abash'd and chill of heart, with sager frowns
Condemns the fair enchantment. On my strain,
Perhaps ev'n now, some cold fastidious judge
Casts a disdainful eye ; and calls my toil,
And calls the love and beauty which I sing,
The dream of folly. Thou, grave censor ! say,
Is Beauty then a dream, because the glooms
Of dulness hang too heavy on thy sense,
To let her shine upon thee ? So the man
Whose eye ne'er open'd on the light of heaven,
Might smile with scorn while raptur'd vision tells
Of the gay-colour'd radiance flushing bright
O'er all creation. From the wise be far
Such gross unhallow'd pride ; nor needs my song
Descend so low ; but rather now unfold,
If human thought could reach, or words unfold,
By what mysterious fabric of the mind,
The deep-felt joys and harmony of sound
Result from airy motion ; and from shape
The lovely phantoms of sublime and fair.
By what fine ties hath God connected things
When present in the mind, which in themselves
Have no connexion ? Sure the rising sun

O'er the cerulean convex of the sea,
With equal brightness and with equal warmth
Might roll his fiery orb; nor yet the soul
Thus feel her frame expanded, and her powers
Exulting in the splendour she beholds;
Like a young conqueror moving through the pomp
Of some triumphal day. When join'd at eve,
Soft-murmuring streams and gales of gentlest breath
Melodious Philomela's wakeful strain
Attemper, could not man's discerning ear
'Through all its tones the sympathy pursue;
Nor yet this breath divine of nameless joy
Steal through his veins, and fan the awaken'd heart,
Mild as the breeze, yet rapturous as the song?

But were not Nature still endow'd at large
With all which life requires, though unadorn'd
With such enchantment? Wherefore then her form
So exquisitely fair? her breath perfumed
With such ethereal sweetness? whence her voice
Inform'd at will to raise or to depress [light
The impassion'd soul? and whence the robes of
Which thus invest her with more lovely pomp
Than Fancy can describe? Whence but from Thee,
O source divine of ever-flowing love,
And thy unmeasured goodness? Not content
With every food of life to nourish man,
By kind illusions of the wondering sense
Thou makest all nature beauty to his eye,
Or music to his ear: well pleased he scans
The goodly prospect; and with inward smiles
Treads the gay verdure of the painted plain;
Beholds the azure canopy of heaven,
And living lamps that over-arch his head
With more than regal splendour; bends his ears

To the full choir of water, air, and earth ;
Nor heeds the pleasing error of his thought,
Nor doubts the painted green or azure arch,
Nor questions more the music's mingling sounds,
Than space, or motion, or eternal time ;
So sweet he feels their influence to attract
The fixed soul ; to brighten the dull glooms
Of care, and make the destined road of life
Delightful to his feet. So fables tell,
The adventurous hero, bound on hard exploits,
Beholds with glad surprise, by secret spells
Of some kind sage, the patron of his toils,
A visionary paradise disclosed
Amid the dubious wild : with streams, and shades,
And airy songs, the enchanted landscape smiles,
Cheers his long labours, and renews his frame.

What then is taste, but these internal powers
Active, and stroug, and feelingly alive
To each fine impulse ? a discerning sense
Of decent and sublime, with quick disgust
From things deform'd, or disarranged, or gross
In species ? This, nor gems, nor stores of gold,
Nor purple state, nor culture can bestow ;
But God alone, when first his active hand
Imprints the secret bias of the soul.
He, mighty Parent ! wise and just in all,
Free as the vital breeze or light of heaven,
Reveals the charms of Nature. Ask the swain
Who journeys homeward from a summer day's
Long labour, why, forgetful of his toils
And due repose, he loiters to behold
The sunshine gleaming, as through amber clouds,
O'er all the western sky ; full soon, I ween,
His rude expression and untutor'd airs,

Beyond the power of language, will unfold
 The form of beauty smiling at his heart,
 How lovely ! how commanding ! But though Heaven
 In every breast hath sown these early seeds
 Of love and admiration, yet in vain,
 Without fair culture's kind parental aid,
 Without enlivening suns, and genial showers,
 And shelter from the blast, in vain we hope
 The tender plant should rear its blooming head,
 Or yield the harvest promised in its spring.
 Nor yet will every soil with equal stores
 Repay the tiller's labour ; or attend
 His will, obsequious, whether to produce
 The olive or the laurel. Different minds
 Incline to different objects : one pursues
 The vast alone, the wonderful, the wild ¹⁵ ;
 Another sighs for harmony, and grace,
 And gentlest beauty. Hence when lightning fires
 The arch of heaven, and thunders rock the ground ;
 When furious whirlwinds rend the howling air,
 And Ocean, groaning from his lowest bed,
 Heaves his tempestuous billows to the sky ;
 Amid the mighty uproar, while below
 The nations tremble, Shakspeare looks abroad
 From some high cliff, superior, and enjoys
 The elemental war. But Waller longs ¹⁶,

¹⁵ See note the first of this book.

¹⁶ ' O ! how I long my careless limbs to lay
 Under the plantain shade ; and all the day
 With amorous airs my fancy entertain ' &c.

Waller, *Battle of the Summer Islands*.

And again,

Canto I.

' While in the park I sing, the listening deer
 Attend my passion, and forget to fear,' &c.

At Penshurst.

All on the margin of some flowery stream
To spread his careless limbs amid the cool
Of plantain shades, and to the listening deer
The tale of slighted vows and love's disdain
Resound soft-warbling all the live-long day :
Consenting Zephyr sighs ; the weeping rill
Joins in his plaint, melodious ; mute the groves ;
And hill and dale with all their echoes mourn.
Such and so various are the tastes of men.

O ! bless'd of Heaven, whom not the languid songs
Of luxury, the siren ! not the bribes
Of sordid wealth, nor all the gaudy spoils
Of pageant honour can seduce to leave
Those ever-blooming sweets, which from the store
Of Nature fair Imagination culls
To charm the enliven'd soul ! What though not all
Of mortal offspring can attain the heights
Of envied life ; though only few possess
Patrician treasures or imperial state ;
Yet Nature's care, to all her children just,
With richer treasures and an ampler state,
Endows at large whatever happy man
Will deign to use them. His the city's pomp,
The rural honours his. Whate'er adorns
The princely dome, the column and the arch,
The breathing marble and the sculptured gold,
Beyond the proud possessor's narrow claim,
His tuneful breast enjoys. For him, the Spring
Distills her dews, and from the silken gem
Its lucid leaves unfolds : for him, the hand
Of Autumn tinges every fertile branch
With blooming gold and blushes like the morn.
Each passing hour sheds tribute from her wings ;
And still new beauties meet his lonely walk,

And loves unfelt attract him. Not a breeze
 Flies o'er the meadow, not a cloud imbibes
 The setting sun's effulgence, not a strain
 From all the tenants of the warbling shade
 Ascends, but whence his bosom can partake
 Fresh pleasure, unproved ¹⁷. Nor thence partakes
 Fresh pleasure only : for the attentive mind,
 By this harmonious action on her powers,
 Becomes herself harmonious ; wont so oft
 In outward things to meditate the charm
 Of sacred order, soon she seeks at home
 To find a kindred order, to exert
 Within herself this elegance of love,
 This fair inspired delight : her temper'd powers
 Refine at length, and every passion wears
 A chaster, milder, more attractive mien.

¹⁷ That this account may not appear rather poetically extravagant than just in philosophy, it may be proper to produce the sentiment of one of the greatest, wisest, and best of men on this head; one so little to be suspected of partiality in the case, that he reckons it among those favours for which he was especially thankful to the gods, that they had not suffered him to make any great proficiency in the arts of eloquence and poetry, lest by that means he should have been diverted from pursuits of more importance to his high station. Speaking of the beauty of universal nature, he observes, that 'there is a pleasing and graceful aspect in every object we perceive, when once we consider its connexion with that general order.' He instances in many things which at first sight would be thought rather deformities; and then adds, that 'a man who enjoys a sensibility of temper with a just comprehension of the universal order—will discern many amiable things, not credible to every mind, but to those alone who have entered into an honourable familiarity with Nature and her works.'—M. Antonin. iii. 2.

But if to ampler prospects, if to gaze
On Nature's form, where, negligent of all
These lesser graces, she assumes the port
Of that Eternal Majesty that weigh'd
The world's foundations, if to these the mind
Exalts her daring eye ; then mightier far
Will be the change, and nobler. Would the forms
Of servile custom cramp her generous powers ?
Would sordid policies, the barbarous growth
Of ignorance and rapine, bow her down
To tame pursuits, to indolence and fear ?
Lo ! she appeals to Nature, to the winds
And rolling waves, the sun's unwearied course,
The elements and seasons : all declare
For what the Eternal Maker has ordain'd
The powers of man : we feel within ourselves
His energy divine : he tells the heart,
He meant, he made us, to behold and love
What he beholds and loves, the general orb
Of life and being ; to be great like him,
Beneficent and active. Thus the men
Whom Nature's works can charm, with God himself
Hold converse ; grow familiar, day by day,
With his conceptions ; act upon his plan ;
And form to his the relish of their souls.

H Y M N

TO

THE NAIADS.

ARGUMENT.

The Nymphs, who preside over springs and rivulets, are addressed at day-break, in honour of their several functions, and of the relations which they bear to the natural and to the moral world. Their origin is deduced from the first allegorical deities, or powers of nature, according to the doctrine of the old mythological poets, concerning the generation of the gods and the rise of things. They are then successively considered, as giving motion to the air, and exciting summer-breezes; as nourishing and beautifying the vegetable creation; as contributing to the fulness of navigable rivers, and consequently to the maintenance of commerce; and by that means, to the maritime part of military power. Next is represented their favourable influence upon health, when assisted by rural exercise; which introduces their connexion with the art of physic, and the happy effects of mineral medicinal springs. Lastly, they are celebrated for the friendship which the Muses bear them, and for the true inspiration which temperance only can receive; in opposition to the enthusiasm of the more licentious poets.

O'ER yonder eastern hill the twilight pale
Walks forth from darkness; and the god of day,

With bright Astræa seated by his side,
Waits yet to leave the ocean. Tarry, nymphs !
Ye nymphs, ye blue-eyed progeny of Thames,
Who now the mazes of this rugged heath
Trace with your fleeting steps ; who all night long
Repeat, amid the cool and tranquil air,
Your lonely murmurs ; tarry, and receive
My offer'd lay. To pay you homage due,
I leave the gates of sleep ; nor shall my lyre
Too far into the splendid hours of morn
Engage your audience : my observant hand
Shall close the strain ere any sultry beam
Approach you. To your subterranean haunts
Ye then may timely steal ; to pace with care
The humid sands ; to loosen from the soil
The bubbling sources ; to direct the rills
To meet in wider channels ; or beneath
Some grotto's dripping arch, at height of noon,
To slumber, shelter'd from the burning heaven.

Where shall my song begin, ye Nymphs ! or end ?
Wide is your praise and copious—First of things,
First of the lonely powers, ere time arose,
Were Love and Chaos. Love, the sire of Fate ;
Elder than Chaos. Born of Fate was Time,
Who many sons and many comely births
Devour'd, relentless father ! till the child
Of Rhea drove him from the upper sky,
And quell'd his deadly might. Then social reign'd
The kindred powers, Tethys, and reverend Ops,
And spotless Vesta ; while supreme of sway
Remain'd the cloud-compeller. From the couch
Of Tethys sprang the sedgy-crowned race,
Who from a thousand urns, o'er every clime,
Send tribute to their parent ; and from them

Are ye, O Naiads ! Arethusa fair ;
And tuneful Aganippe ; that sweet name,
Bandusia ; that soft family which dwelt
With Syrian Daphne ; and the honour'd tribes
Beloved of Pæon. Listen to my strain,
Daughters of Tethys ! listen to your praise.

You, Nymphs ! the winged offspring, which of old
Aurora to divine Astræus bore,
Owns, and your aid beseecheth. When the might
Of Hyperion, from his noontide throne,
Unbends their languid pinions, aid from you
They ask ; Favonius and the mild South-west
From you relief implore. Your sallying streams
Fresh vigour to their weary wings impart.
Again they fly, disporting ; from the mead
Half ripen'd and the tender blades of corn
To sweep the noxious mildew, or dispel
Contagious steams, which oft the parched earth
Breathes on her fainting sons. From noon to eve,
Along the river and the paved brook,
Ascend the cheerful breezes, hail'd of bards,
Who, fast by learned Cam, the Æolian lyre
Solicit ; nor unwelcome to the youth,
Who on the heights of Tibur, all inclined
O'er rushing Anio, with a pious hand
The reverend scene delineates, broken fanes,
Or tombs, or pillar'd aqueducts, the pomp
Of ancient time ; and haply, while he scans
The ruins, with a silent tear revolves
The fame and fortune of imperious Rome.

You too, O Nymphs ! and your unenvious aid
The rural powers confess, and still prepare
For you their choicest treasures. Pan commands,
Oft as the Delian king with Sirius holds

The central heavens, the father of the grove
Commands his Dryads over your abodes
To spread their deepest umbrage. Well the god
Remembereth how indulgent ye supplied
Your genial dews to nurse them in their prime.

Pales, the pasture's queen, where'er ye stray,
Pursues your steps delighted, and the path
With living verdure clothes. Around your haunts
The laughing Chloris, with profusest hand,
Throws wide her blooms, her odours. Still with you
Pomona seeks to dwell : and o'er the lawns,
And o'er the vale of Richmond, where with Thames
Ye love to wander, Amalthea pours
Well-pleased the wealth of that Ammonian horn,
Her dower ; unmindful of the fragrant isles
Nyssean or Atlantic. Nor canst thou,
(Albeit oft, ungrateful, thou dost mock,
The beverage of the sober Naiad's urn,
O Bretas ! O-Lensan !) nor canst thou
Disown the powers whose bounty, ill repaid,
With nectar feeds thy tendrils. Yet from me,
Yet, blameless Nymphs ! from my delighted lyre,
Accept the rites your bounty well may claim,
Nor heed the scoffings of the Edonian band.

For better praise awaits you. Thames, your sire,
As down the verdant slope your duteous rills
Descend, the tribute stately Thames receives,
Delighted, and your piety applauds ;
And bids his copious tide roll on secure,
For faithful are his daughters ; and with words
Auspicious gratulates the bark which, now
His banks forsaking, her adventurous wings
Yields to the breeze, with Albion's happy gifts
Extremest isles to bless. And oft at morn,

When Hermes, from Olympus bent o'er earth
To bear the words of Jove, on yonder hill
Stoops lightly-sailing ; oft intent your springs
He views, and waving o'er some new-born stream
His bless'd pacific wand, ' And yet, (he cries)
Yet, (cries the son of Maia) though recluse
And silent be your stores ; from you, fair Nymphs !
Flows wealth and kind society to men.
By you my function and my honour'd name
Do I possess ; while o'er the Bætic vale,
Or through the towers of Memphis, or the palms
By sacred Ganges water'd, I conduct
The English merchant ; with the buxom fleece
Of fertile Ariconium while I clothe
Sarmatian kings ; or to the household gods
Of Syria, from the bleak Cornubian shore,
Dispense, the mineral treasure which of old
Sidonian pilots sought, when this fair land
Was yet unconscious of those generous arts
Which wise Phœnicia from their native clime
Transplanted to a more indulgent heaven.'

Such are the words of Hermes ; such the praise,
O Naiads ! which from tongues celestial waits
Your bounteous deeds. From bounty issueth power :
And those who, sedulous in prudent works,
Relieve the wants of nature, Jove repays
With noble wealth, and his own seat on earth,
Fit judgments to pronounce, and curb the might
Of wicked men. Your kind unfailing urns
Not vainly to the hospitable arts
Of Hermes yield their store. For, O ye Nymphs !
Hath he not won the unconquerable queen
Of arms to court your friendship ? You, she owns
The fair associates who extend her sway

Wide o'er the mighty deep ; and grateful things
Of you she uttereth, oft as from the shore
Of Thames, or Medway's vale, or the green banks
Of Vecta, she her thundering navy leads
To Calpè's foaming channel, or the rough
Cantabrian surge ; her auspices divine
Imparting to the senate and the prince
Of Albion, to dismay barbaric kings,
The Iberian, or the Celt. The pride of kings
Was ever scorn'd by Pallas ; and of old
Rejoiced the virgin, from the brazen prow
Of Athens, o'er Ægina's gloomy surge,
To drive her clouds and storms, o'erwhelming all
The Persian's promised glory, when the realms
Of Indus and the soft Ionian clime,
When Libya's torrid champaign, and the rocks
Of cold Imaüs, join'd their servile bands,
To sweep the sons of liberty from earth.
In vain ! Minerva on the bounding prow
Of Athens stood, and with the thunder's voice
Denounced her terrors on their impious heads,
And shook her burning ægis. Xerxes saw
From Heracléum, on the mountain's height
Throned in his golden car ; he knew the sign
Celestial ; felt unrighteous hope forsake
His faltering heart, and turn'd his face with shame.

Hail, ye who share the stern Minerva's power ;
Who arm the hand of Liberty for war ;
And give to the renown'd Britannic name
To awe contending monarchs ; yet benign,
Yet mild of nature, to the works of peace
More prone, and lenient of the many ills
Which wait on human life. Your gentle aid
Hygeia well can witness ; she who saves

From poisonous cates and cups of pleasing bane,
The wretch devoted to the entangling snares
Of Bacchus and of Comus. Him she leads
To Cynthia's lonely haunts. To spread the toils,
To beat the coverts, with the jovial horn
At dawn of day to summon the loud hounds,
She calls the lingering sluggard from his dreams;
And where his breast may drink the mountain
And where the fervour of the sunny vale [breeze,
May beat upon his brow, through devious paths
Beckons his rapid courser. Nor when ease,
Cool ease and welcome slumbers have becalm'd
His eager bosom, does the queen of health
Her pleasing care withhold. His decent board
She guards, presiding, and the frugal Powers
With joy sedate leads in; and while the brown
Ennæan dame with Pan presents her stores;
While changing still, and comely in the change,
Vertumnus and the Hours before him spread
The garden's banquet; you to crown his feast,
To crown his feast, O Naiads! you the fair
Hygeia calls; and from your shelving seats,
And groves of poplar, plenteous cups ye bring,
To slake his veins; till soon a purer tide
Flows down those loaded channels; washeth off
The dregs of luxury, the lurking seeds
Of crude disease; and through the abodes of life
Sends vigour, sends repose. Hail, Naiads! hail,
Who give to labour, health; to stooping age
The joys which youth had squander'd. Oft your urns
Will I invoke; and frequent in your praise,
Abash the frantic thyrsus with my song.

For not estranged from your benignant arts
Is he, the god, to whose mysterious shrine

My youth was sacred, and my votive cares
Belong ; the learned Pæon. Oft when all
His cordial treasures he hath search'd in vain ;
When herbs, and potent trees, and drops of balm
Rich with the genial influence of the sun,
(To rouse dark fancy from her plaintive dreams,
To brace the nerveless arm, with food to win
Sick appetite, or hush the unquiet breast,
Which pines with silent passion) he in vain
Hath proved ; to your deep mansions he descends.
Your gates of humid rock, your dim arcades,
He entereth, where impurpled veins of ore
Gleam on the roof ; where through the rigid mine
Your trickling rills insinuate. There the god
From your indulgent hands the streaming bowl
Wafts to his pale-eyed suppliants ; wafts the seeds
Metallic and the elemental salts [soon
Wash'd from the pregnant glebe. 'They drink ; and
Flies pain, flies inauspicious care ; and soon
The social haunt or unfrequented shade
Hears ' Io, Io Pæan ; ' as of old,
When Python fell. And, O propitious Nymphs !
Oft as for hapless mortals I implore
Your salutary springs, through every urn
O shed your healing treasures. With the first
And finest breath, which from the genial strife
Of mineral fermentation springs, like light
O'er the fresh morning's vapours, lustrate then
The fountain, and inform the rising wave.

My lyre shall pay your bounty. Scorn not ye
That humble tribute. Though a mortal hand
Excite the strings to utterance, yet for themes
Not unregarded of celestial powers,
I frame their language ; and the Muses deign

To guide the pious tenor of my lay.
The Muses (sacred by their gifts divine)
In early days did to my wondering sense
Their secrets oft reveal ; oft my raised ear
In slumber felt their music ; oft at noon,
Or hour of sun-set, by some lonely stream,
In field or shady grove, they taught me words
Of power, from death and envy to preserve [mind,
The good man's name : whence yet with grateful
And offerings unprofaned by ruder eye,
My vows I send, my homage, to the seats
Of rocky Cirrha, where with you they dwell ;
Where you, their chaste companions, they admit
Through all the hallow'd scene ; where oft intent,
And leaning o'er Castalia's mossy verge,
They mark the cadence of your confluent urns,
How tuneful, yielding gratefulest repose
To their consorted measure : till again,
With emulation all the sounding choir,
And bright Apollo, leader of the song,
Their voices through the liquid air exalt,
And sweep their lofty strings—those powerful strings
That charm the mind of gods ; that fill the courts
Of wide Olympus with oblivion sweet
Of evils, with immortal rest from cares ;
Assuage the terrors of the throne of Jove ;
And quench the formidable thunderbolt
Of unrelenting fire. With slacken'd wings,
While now the solemn concert breathes around,
Incumbent o'er the sceptre of his lord
Sleeps the stern eagle, by the number'd notes
Possess'd, and satiate with the melting tone ;
Sovereign of birds ! The furious god of war,
His darts forgetting, and the winged wheels

'That bear him vengeful o'er the embattled plain,
Relents, and soothes his own fierce heart to ease,
Most welcome ease. The Sire of gods and men,
In that great moment of divine delight,
Looks down on all that live ; and whatsoe'er
He loves not, o'er the peopled earth and o'er
The interminated ocean, he beholds
Cursed with abhorrence by his doom severe,
And troubled at the sound. Ye, Naiads ! ye
With ravish'd ears the melody attend
Worthy of sacred silence. But the slaves
Of Bacchus with tempestuous clamours strive
To drown the heavenly strains ; of highest Jove,
Irreverent, and by mad presumption fired
Their own discordant raptures to advance
With hostile emulation. Down they rush
From Nysa's vine-impurpled cliff, the dames
Of Thrace, the Satyrs, and the unruly Fauns,
With old Silenus, reeling through the crowd
Which gambols round him, in convulsions wild
'Tossing their limbs, and brandishing in air
The ivy-mantled thyrsus, or the torch [pipe's
Through black smoke flaming, to the Phrygian
Shrill voice, and to the clashing cymbals, mix'd
With shrieks and frantic uproar. May the gods
From every unpolluted ear avert
Their orgies ! If within the seats of men,
Within the walls, the gates, where Pallas holds
The guardian key, if haply there be found
Who loves to mingle with the revel-band,
And hearken to their accents ; who aspires
From such instructors to inform his breast
With verse ; let him, fit votarist, implore
Their inspiration. He perchance the gifts

Of young Lyæus, and the dread exploits,
May sing in aptest numbers : he the fate
Of sober Pentheus ; he the Paphian rites,
And naked Mars with Cytherea chain'd,
And strong Alcides in the spinster's robes,
May celebrate, applauded. But with you,
O Naiads ! far from that unhallow'd rout,
Must dwell the man whoe'er to praised themes
Invokes the immortal Muse :—the immortal Muse
To your calm habitations, to the cave
Corycian or the Delphic mount, will guide
His footsteps ; and with your unsullied streams
His lips will bathe : whether the eternal lore
Of Themis, or the majesty of Jove,
To mortals he reveal ; or teach his lyre
The unenvied guerdon of the patriot's toils,
In those unfading islands of the bless'd,
Where sacred bards abide. Hail, honour'd Nymphs !
Thrice hail ! For you the Cyrenaïc shell
Behold, I touch, revering. To my songs
Be present ye with favourable feet,
And all profaner audience far remove.

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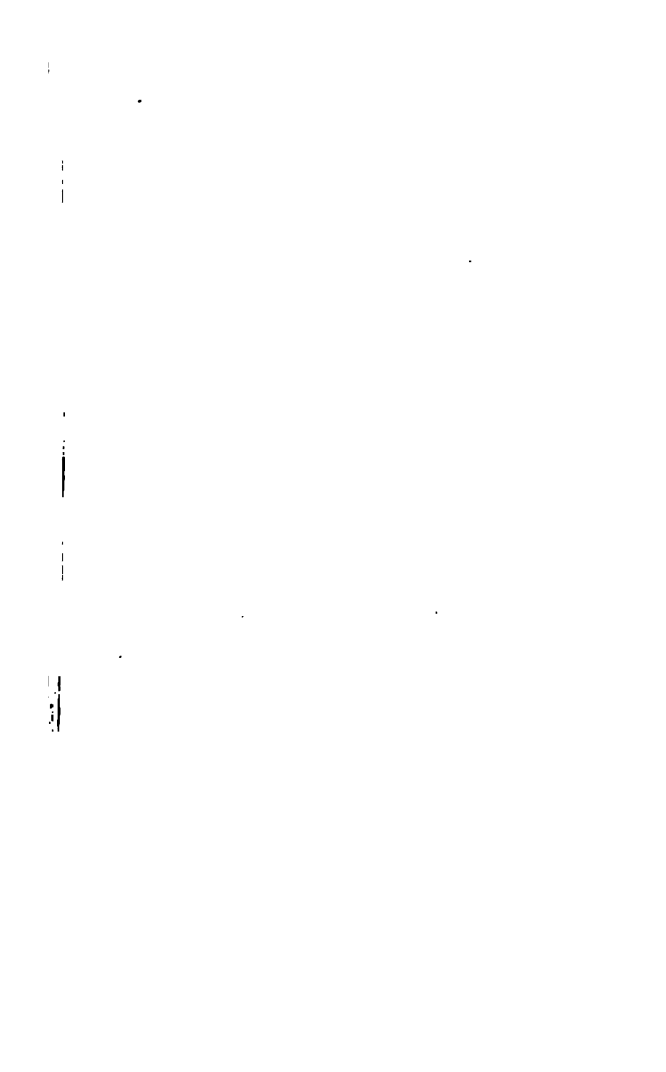
TO

SHAKSPEARE.

O YOUTHS and virgins ! O declining eld !
O pale misfortune's slaves ! O ye who dwell
Unknown with humble quiet ; ye who wait
In courts, or fill the golden seat of kings !
O sons of sport and pleasure ! O thou wretch,
That weep'st for jealous love, or the sore wounds
Of conscious guilt, or death's rapacious hand,
Which left thee void of hope ! O ye who roam
In exile ; ye who through the embattled field
Seek bright renown ; or who for nobler palm
Contend, the leaders of a public cause ;
Approach : behold this marble. Know ye not
The features ? Hath not oft his faithful tongue
Told you the fashion of your own estate,
The secrets of your bosom ? Here, then, round
His monument with reverence while ye stand,
Say to each other : ' This was Shakspeare's form ;
Who walk'd in every path of human life,
Felt every passion ; and to all mankind
Doth now, will ever, that experience yield,
Which his own genius only could acquire.'

G R A Y.

ELEGY
IN A COUNTRY CHURCH-YARD,
AND
OTHER POEMS.



GRAY'S ELEGY
IN A
COUNTRY CHURCH YARD.



His listless length at noon tide would he stretch
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

R. Westall R.A. del.

W. Grenville sc.

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G R A Y.

—◆—
ELEGY

WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCH-YARD.

THE curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds :

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower,
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Hark ! how the sacred calm that breathes around,
Bids every fierce tumultuous passion cease ;
In still small accents whispering from the ground,
A grateful earnest of eternal peace.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care :
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their harrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke :
How jocund did they drive their team afield !
How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke !

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure ;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

'The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour ;
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault,
If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn, or animated bust,
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath ?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death ?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire ;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre :

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of Time, did ne'er unroll ;
Chill Penury repress'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear :
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden, that, with dauntless breast,
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

The applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade : nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined ;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind ;

The struggling pangs of conscious Truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous Shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenour of their way :

Yet ev'n these bones from insult to protect,
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by the unletter'd Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply ;
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind ?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires ;
Ev'n from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of the unhonour'd dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate ;
If chance, by lonely Contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate ;—

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
'Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
'To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

- ‘ There, at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.
- ‘ Him have we seen the greenwood side along,
While o’er the heath we hied, our labour done,
Oft as the woodlark piped her farewell song,
With wistful eyes pursue the setting sun.¹
- ‘ Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove ;
Now drooping, woeful-wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or cross’d in hopeless love.
- ‘ One morn I miss’d him on the ’custom’d hill,
Along the heath, and near his favourite tree ;
Another came ; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he ;
- ‘ The next, with dirges due in sad array,
Slow through the church-way path we saw him
borne,—
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay,
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.’

¹ This stanza completes the account of the Poet's day, although in the author's MS. it has hitherto appeared only in the form of a note ; but, as Mr. Mason observes, ‘ without it, we have only his morning walk and his noon-tide repose.’

THE EPITAPH.¹

HERE rests his head upon the lap of Earth
A youth, to Fortune and to Fame unknown .
Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere ;
Heaven did a recompense as largely send :
He gave to Misery (all he had) a tear,
He gain'd from Heaven ('twas all he wish'd) a
friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose, ,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

¹ Before the Epitaph, Mr. Gray originally inserted a very beautiful stanza, which was printed in some of the first editions, but afterwards omitted, because he thought that it was too long a parenthesis in this place. The lines, however, are, in themselves, exquisitely fine, and demand preservation.

There scatter'd oft, the earliest of the year,
By hands unseen are showers of violets found ;
The redbreast loves to build and warble there,
And little footsteps lightly print the ground.

[The Editor of the present edition has ventured to recall into the Elegy one stanza (*the fourth*) which appears only in the margin of former editions, upon a hint received from a gentleman resident at Stoke Park, in the following

letter: 'I do not see how the edition could suffer, in a critical point of view, by the restoration of that fine stanza of Gray's into the body of the Elegy. It is acknowledged, by Mason and others, to be equal to any in the poem; and certainly it contains more to characterize it than any other. The cause of its unfortunate rejection by the author is manifest, and shows that it was not from his having disapproved it. From two preceding, and a following stanza, *which were rejected with it*, he withdrew two ideas, and some lines, which he transferred and worked up in other parts of the Elegy, thus leaving this fine stanza insulated; and because it so became unfitted for the particular place for which he had first designed it, he dropped it altogether. But yet it contained only an abrupt and sudden reflection; which was suitable equally to other passages or places, though not employed there. This he appears not to have considered; and he thereby incautiously despoiled his poem of a sentiment, not only fitting, but moreover eminently requisite. Now, this sentiment finds a natural place immediately *after* the *third* stanza;—after the descriptions of darkness and silence, and before the minuter particulars of the church-yard are entered upon. It would, therefore, I think, most sublimely constitute the *fourth* stanza of the Elegy. In that place, it would prepare the mind for the solemn sequel, and throw a religious sanctity over it; at the same time correcting and explaining, what has always given me and others offence and pain,—the equivocal expression, 'each in his narrow cell *for ever* laid:' showing, that the Poet only meant 'for ever,' with reference to the scenes of *this present life*.']

ON THE SPRING.

Lo ! where the rosy-bosom'd Hours
Fair Venus' train, appear,
Disclose the long-expected flowers,
And wake the purple year !
The Attic warbler pours her throat,
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
The untaught harmony of Spring :
While, whispering pleasure as they fly,
Cool Zephyrs through the clear blue sky
Their gather'd fragrance fling.

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch.
A broader browner shade,
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
O'er-canopies the glade,
Beside some water's rushy brink
With me the Muse shall sit, and think
(At ease reclined in rustic state)
How vain the ardour of the crowd,
How low, how little are the proud,
How indigent the great !

Still is the toiling hand of Care ;
The panting herds repose :
Yet hark, how through the peopled air
The busy murmur glows !
The insect youth are on the wing,
Eager to taste the honied spring,

And float amid the liquid noon :
Some lightly o'er the current skim ;
Some show their gaily-gilded trim
Quick glancing to the sun.

To Contemplation's sober eye
Such is the race of man :
And they that creep, and they that fly,
Shall end where they began.
Alike the busy and the gay
But flutter through life's little day,
In Fortune's varying colours dress'd :
Brush'd by the hand of rough mischance,
Or chill'd by age, their airy dance
They leave, in dust to rest.

Methinks I hear, in accents low,
The sportive kind reply :
Poor moralist ! and what art thou ?
A solitary fly !
Thy joys no glittering female meets ;
No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets,
No painted plumage to display :
On hasty wings thy youth is flown ;
Thy sun is set, thy spring is gone—
We frolic while 'tis May.

II

ON

PROSPECT OF ETON COLLEGE.

 ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΣ,

 ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΣ, ἢ τὸ δυστυχὲς.
 MENANDER.

YE distant spires, ye antique towers,
 That crown the watery glade,
 Where grateful Science still adores
 Her HENRY'S holy shade;
 And ye, that from the stately brow
 Of Windsor's heights the expanse below
 Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,
 Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among
 Wanders the hoary Thames along
 His silver-winding way:

Ah, happy hills! ah, pleasing shade!
 Ah, fields beloved in vain!
 Where once my careless childhood stray'd,
 A stranger yet to pain!
 I feel the gales that from ye blow
 A momentary bliss bestow,
 As waving fresh their gladsome wing,
 My weary soul they seem to soothe,
 And, redolent of joy and youth,
 To breathe a second spring.

Say, Father Thames, for thou hast seen
Full many a sprightly race,
Disporting on thy margent green,
The paths of pleasure trace ;
Who foremost now delight to cleave,
With pliant arm, thy glassy wave ?
The captive linnet which enthrall ?
What idle progeny succeed
To chase the rolling circle's speed,
Or urge the flying ball ?

While some, on earnest business bent,
Their murmuring labours ply
'Gainst graver hours, that bring constraint
To sweeten liberty ;
Some bold adventurers disdain
The limits of their little reign,
And unknown regions dare descry :
Still as they run they look behind,
They hear a voice in every wind,
And snatch a fearful joy.

Gay hope is theirs by fancy fed,
Less pleasing when possess'd ;
The tear forgot as soon as shed,
The sunshine of the breast :
Theirs buxom Health, of rosy hue,
Wild Wit, Invention ever new,
And lively Cheer, of Vigour born ;
The thoughtless day, the easy night,
The spirits pure, the slumbers light,
That fly the approach of morn.

Alas ! regardless of their doom,
The little victims play !
No sense have they of ills to come,
Nor care beyond to-day :
Yet see, how all around them wait
The ministers of human fate,
And black Misfortune's baleful train !
Ah, show them where in ambush stand,
To seize their prey, the murderous band !
Ah, tell them they are men !

These shall the fury Passions tear,
The vultures of the mind,
Disdainful Anger, pallid Fear,
And Shame that sculks behind ;
Or pining Love shall waste their youth,
Or Jealousy, with rankling tooth,
That inly gnaws the secret heart ;
And Envy wan, and faded Care,
Grim-visaged comfortless Despair,
And Sorrow's piercing dart.

Ambition this shall tempt to rise,
Then whirl the wretch from high,
To bitter Scorn a sacrifice,
And grinning Infamy.
The stings of Falsehood those shall try,
And hard Unkindness' alter'd eye,
That mocks the tear it forced to flow ;
And keen Remorse, with blood defiled,
And moody Madness laughing wild
Amid severest woe.

Lo, in the Vale of Years beneath
A grisly troop are seen,
The painful family of Death,
More hideous than their queen :
This racks the joints, this fires the veins,
That every labouring sinew strains.
Those in the deeper vitals rage :
Lo, Poverty, to fill the band,
That numbs the soul with icy hand,
And slow-consuming Age.

To each his sufferings : all are men,
Condemn'd alike to groan ;
The tender for another's pain,
The unfeeling for his own.
Yet, ah ! why should they know their fate,
Since sorrow never comes too late,
And happiness too swiftly flies ?
Thought would destroy their paradise.
No more ;—where ignorance is bliss,
'Tis folly to be wise.

TO ADVERSITY.

—— Ζητα
 Τον φρονειν Βροτους οδυ-
 σαττα, τῷ παθει μα-
 θητα κυριως εχειν.

ÆSCHYLUS, in *Agamemnone*.

DAUGHTER of Jove, relentless power,
 Thou tamer of the human breast,
 Whose iron scourge and torturing hour
 The bad affright, afflict the best !
 Bound in thy adamantine chain,
 The proud are taught to taste of pain,
 And purple tyrants vainly groan
 With pangs unfelt before, unpitied and alone.

When first thy sire to send on earth
 Virtue, his darling child, design'd,
 To thee he gave the heavenly birth,
 And bade to form her infant mind.
 Stern rugged nurse ! thy rigid lore
 With patience many a year she bore :
 What sorrow was thou badest her know,
 And from her own she learn'd to melt at other's woe.

Scared at thy frown terrific, fly
 Self-pleasing Folly's idle brood,
 Wild Laughter, Noise, and thoughtless Joy,
 And leave us leisure to be good.

Light they disperse ; and with them go
The summer friend, the flattering foe ;
By vain Prosperity received,
To her they vow their truth, and are again believed.

Wisdom, in sable garb array'd,
Immersed in rapturous thought profound,
And Melancholy, silent maid,
With leaden eye that loves the ground,
Still on thy solemn steps attend :
Warm Charity, the general friend,
With Justice, to herself severe,
And Pity, dropping soft the sadly-pleasing tear.

O, gently on thy suppliant's head,
Dread goddess, lay thy chastening hand !
Not in thy Gorgon terrors clad,
Not circled with the vengeful band
(As by the impious thou art seen)
With thundering voice and threatening mien,
With screaming Horror's funeral cry,
Despair, and fell Disease, and ghastly Poverty.

Thy form benign, O Goddess ! wear,
Thy milder influence impart ;
Thy philosophic train be there,
To soften, not to wound my heart.
The generous spark extinct revive,
Teach me to love and to forgive,
Exact my own defects to scan,
What others are to feel, and know myself a man.

ON
THE PLEASURE ARISING FROM
VICISSITUDE.

[Left unfinished by Mr. Gray: with additions, in brackets,
by Mr. Mason.]

Now the golden Morn aloft
Waves her dew-bespangled wing,
With vermeil cheek and whisper soft
She wooes the tardy Spring :
Till April starts, and calls around
The sleeping fragrance from the ground ;
And lightly o'er the living scene
Scatters his freshest, tenderest green.

New-born flocks, in rustic dance,
Frisking ply their feeble feet ;
Forgetful of their wintry trance,
The birds his presence greet :
But chief, the sky-lark warbles high
His trembling, thrilling ecstasy ;
And, lessening from the dazzled sight,
Melts into air and liquid light.

Rise, my soul, on wings of fire,
Rise the rapturous choir among !
Hark ! 'tis Nature strikes the lyre,
And leads the general song.
[Warm let the lyric transport flow,
Warm as the ray that bids it glow,
And animates the vernal grove
With health, with harmony, and love.]

Yesterday the sullen year
 Saw the snowy whirlwind fly ;
 Mute was the music of the air,
 The herd stood drooping by :
 Their raptures now that wildly flow,
 No yesterday nor morrow know ;
 'Tis man alone that joy describes
 With forward and reverted eyes.

Smiles on past Misfortune's brow
 Soft Reflection's hand can trace,
 And o'er the cheek of Sorrow throw
 A melancholy grace ;
 While Hope prolongs our happier hour,
 Or deepest shades, that dimly lower,
 And blacken round our weary way,
 Gilds with a gleam of distant day.

Still, where rosy Pleasure leads,
 See a kindred Grief pursue ;
 Behind the steps that Misery treads
 Approaching Comfort view :
 The hues of bliss more brightly glow,
 Chastised by sabler tints of woe ;
 And blended form, with artful strife,
 The strength and harmony of life.

See the wretch, that long has tost
 On the thorny bed of pain,
 At length repair his vigour lost,
 And breathe, and walk again :
 The meanest floweret of the vale,
 The simplest note that swells the gale,
 The common sun, the air, the skies,
 To him are opening Paradise.

Humble Quiet builds her cell

Near the source whence Pleasure flows ;
She eyes the clear crystalline well,

And tastes it as it goes :

[While far below the maddening crowd
Rush headlong to the dangerous flood,]
Where broad and turbulent it sweeps,
And perish in the boundless deeps.

Mark where Indolence and Pride,

[Soothed by Flattery's tinkling sound,]

Go, softly rolling, side by side,

Their dull, but daily round :

[To these, if Hebe's self should bring
The purest cup from Pleasure's spring,
Say, can they taste the flavour high
Of sober, simple, genuine joy ?

Mark Ambition's march sublime

Up to Power's meridian height ;

While pale-eyed Envy sees him climb,

And sickens at the sight.

Phantoms of danger, death, and dread,

Float hourly round Ambition's head ;

While Spleen, within his rival's breast,

Sits brooding on her scorpion nest.

Happier he, the peasant, far,

From the pangs of Passion free,

That breathes the keen yet wholesome air

Of rugged Penury.

He, when his morning task is done,

Can slumber in the noontide sun ;

And hie him home, at evening's close,

To sweet repast and calm repose.

He, unconscious whence the bliss,
Feels, and owns in carols rude,
That all the circling joys are his
Of dear Vicissitude.
From toil he wins his spirits light,
From busy day the peaceful night ;
Rich, from the very want of wealth,
In Heaven's best treasures, peace and health.]

SONNET

ON

THE DEATH OF MR. WEST.

IN vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire :
The birds in vain their amorous descant join ;
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire
These ears, alas ! for other notes repine,
A different object do these eyes require :
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine ;
And in my breast the imperfect joys expire.
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men :
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear :
To warm their little loves the birds complain :
I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,
And weep the more, because I weep in vain.

THE PROGRESS OF POESY.

A PINDARIC ODE.

Φωνάγτα συνητοιμασιν¹ ες
 Δι το παν ἐρμηνησιν
 Χατιζει.

PINDAR, Olymp. II.

I. 1.

AWAKE, Æolian lyre, awake,¹
 And give to rapture all thy trembling strings.
 From Helicon's harmonious springs
 A thousand rills their mazy progress take :
 The laughing flowers, that round them blow,
 Drink life and fragrance as they flow.
 Now the rich stream of Music winds along,
 Deep, majestic, smooth, and strong,
 Through verdant vales, and Ceres' golden reign ;
 Now rolling down the steep amain,
 Headlong, impetuous, see it pour :
 The rocks and nodding groves re-bellow to the roar.

¹ Awake, my glory : awake, lute and harp.

David's Psalms.

Pindar styles his own poetry, with its musical accompaniments, Αἰολικὴ μολπῆ, Αἰολιδικὰ χορδαί, Αἰολιδῶν πνοαὶ αὐλῶν, 'Æolian song, Æolian strings, the breath of the Æolian flute.'

The subject and simile, as usual with Pindar, are here united. The various sources of poetry, which give life and lustre to all it touches, are here described ; as well in its

I. 2.

O ! sovereign of the willing soul,²
 Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
 Enchanting shell ! the sullen Cares
 And frantic Passions hear thy soft control.
 On Thracia's hills the lord of war
 Has curb'd the fury of his car,
 And dropp'd his thirsty lance at thy command.
 Perching on the sceptred hand³
 Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feather'd king
 With ruffled plumes and flagging wing :
 Quench'd in dark clouds of slumber lie
 The terror of his beak and lightnings of his eye.

I. 3.

Thee the voice, the dance obey,⁴
 Temper'd to thy warbled lay.
 O'er Idalia's velvet green
 The rosy-crowned Loves are seen
 On Cytherea's day
 With antic Sport, and blue-eyed Pleasures,
 Frisking light in frolic measures ;

quiet majestic progress enriching every subject (otherwise dry and barren) with all the pomp of diction and luxuriant harmony of numbers, as in its more rapid and irresistible course, when swoln and hurried away by the conflict of tumultuous passions.

² Power of harmony to calm the turbulent passions of the soul. The thoughts are borrowed from the first Pythian of Pindar.

³ This is a weak imitation of some beautiful lines in the same ode.

⁴ Power of harmony to produce all the graces of motion in the body.

Now pursuing, now retreating,
 Now in circling troops they meet :
 To brisk notes, in cadence beating,
 Glance their many-twinkling feet.
 Slow melting strains their queen's approach de-
 clare :

Where'er she turns the Graces homage pay.
 With arms sublime, that float upon the air,
 In gliding state she wins her easy way :
 O'er her warm cheek and rising bosom move
 The bloom of young Desire and purple light of
 Love.

II. 1.

Man's feeble race what ills await !
 Labour, and Penury, the racks of Pain,
 Disease, and Sorrow's weeping train,
 And Death, sad refuge from the storms of Fate !
 The fond complaint, my song, disprove,
 And justify the laws of Jove.
 Say, has he given in vain the heavenly Muse ?
 Night and all her sickly dews,
 Her spectres wan, and birds of boding cry,
 He gives to range the dreary sky :
 Till down the eastern cliffs afar
 Hyperion's march they spy, and glittering shafts of
 war.

* To compensate the real or imaginary ills of life, the Muse was given us by the same Providence that sends the day, by its cheerful presence, to dispel the gloom and terror of the night.

II. 2.

6 In climes beyond the solar road,
 Where shaggy forms o'er ice-built mountains roam,
 The Muse has broke the twilight-gloom
 To cheer the shivering native's dull abode.
 And oft, beneath the odorous shade
 Of Chili's boundless forests laid,
 She deigns to hear the savage youth repeat
 In loose numbers wildly sweet
 Their feather-cinctured chief, and dusky loves.
 Her track, where'er the goddess roves,
 Glory pursue, and generous Shame,
 The unconquerable mind, and Freedom's holy
 flame.

II. 3.

Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep,⁷
 Isles, that crown the Ægean deep,
 Fields, that cool Ilissus laves,
 Or where Mæander's amber waves
 In lingering labyrinths creep,

6 Extensive influence of poetic genius over the remotest and most uncivilized nations; its connexion with liberty, and the virtues that naturally attend on it.

7 Progress of Poetry from Greece to Italy, and from Italy to England. Chaucer was not unacquainted with the writings of Dante or of Petrarch. The Earl of Surrey and Sir Thomas Wyatt had travelled in Italy, and formed their taste there. Spenser imitated the Italian writers, and Milton improved on them; but this school expired soon after the Restoration, and a new one arose on the French model, which has subsisted ever since.

[Gray has been long dead: the poets of the present day rather imitate the Italian and early English poets than the French.]

How do your tuneful echoes languish,
 Mute but to the voice of Anguish !
 Where each old poetic mountain
 Inspiration breathed around ;
 Every shade and hallow'd fountain
 Murmur'd deep a solemn sound :
 Till the sad Nine, in Greece's evil hour,
 Left their Parnassus for the Latian plains.
 Alike they scorn the pomp of tyrant Power,
 And coward Vice, that revels in her chains.
 When Latium had her lofty spirit lost,
 They sought, O Albion ! next, thy sea-encircled
 coast.

III. 1.

Far from the sun and summer gale,
 In thy green lap was Nature's darling⁸ laid,
 What time, where lucid Avon stray'd,
 To him the mighty mother did unveil
 Her awful face : the dauntless child
 Stretch'd forth his little arms, and smiled.
 ' This pencil take,' she said, ' whose colours clear
 Richly paint the vernal year :
 Thine too these golden keys, immortal boy !
 This can unlock the gates of joy ;
 Of horror that, and thrilling fears,
 Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic tears.'

III. 2.

Nor second he, that rode sublime⁹
 Upon the seraph wings of Ecstasy,
 The secrets of the abyss to spy.
 He pass'd the flaming bounds of place and time :

⁸ Shakspeare.⁹ Milton.

The living throne, the sapphire blaze,¹⁰
 Where angels tremble while they gaze,
 He saw ; but, blasted with excess of light,
 Closed his eyes in endless night.
 Behold, where Dryden's less presumptuous car
 Wide o'er the fields of glory bear
 Two coursers of ethereal race,¹¹
 With necks in thunder clothed, and long-resound-
 ing pace.¹²

III. 3.

Hark, his hands the lyre explore !
 Bright-eyed Fancy, hovering o'er,
 Scatters from her pictured urn
 Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.
 But ah ! 'tis heard no more¹³——

O Lyre divine, what daring spirit
 Wakes thee now ? 'Though he inherit
 Nor the pride, nor ample pinion,
 That the Theban eagle bear,¹⁴
 Sailing with supreme dominion
 Through the azure deep of air :

¹⁰ ' For the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels, And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone. This was the appearance of the glory of the Lord.'—*Ezekiel*, i. 20, 26, 28.

¹¹ Meant to express the stately march and sounding energy of Dryden's rhymes.

¹² Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder ? *Job*.

¹³ We have had in our language no other odes of the sublime kind than that of Dryden on St. Cecilia's day.

¹⁴ Pindar compares himself to that bird, and his enemies to ravens that croak and clamour in vain below, while it pursues its flight, regardless of their noise.

Yet oft before his infant eyes would run

Such forms as glitter in the Muse's ray
With orient hues, unborrow'd of the sun :

Yet shall he mount, and keep his distant way
Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate,
Beneath the good how far—but far above the
great.

THE BARD.

A PINDARIC ODE.

[This Ode is founded on a tradition current in Wales, that Edward the First, when he completed the conquest of that country, ordered all the Bards that fell into his hands to be put to death.

The original argument of this Ode, as its author had set it down on one of the pages of his common-place book, was as follows: 'The army of Edward I. as they march through a deep valley, are suddenly stopped by the appearance of a venerable figure seated on the summit of an inaccessible rock, who, with a voice more than human, reproaches the king with all the misery and desolation which he had brought on his country; foretels the misfortunes of the Norman race; and with prophetic spirit declares, that all his cruelty shall never extinguish the noble ardour of poetic genius in this island; and that men shall never be wanting to celebrate true virtue and valour in immortal strains, to expose vice and infamous pleasure, and boldly censure tyranny and oppression. His song ended, he precipitates himself from the mountain, and is swallowed up by the river that rolls at its foot.']

I. 1.

'RUIN seize thee, ruthless king!
 Confusion on thy banners wait;
 Though fann'd by Conquest's crimson wing,
 They mock the air with idle state.
 Helm, nor hauberk's twisted mail,¹
 Nor ev'n thy virtues, tyrant, shall avail

¹ The hauberk was a texture of steel ringlets, or rings interwoven, forming a coat of mail that sat close to the body, and adapted itself to every motion.

To save thy secret soul from nightly fears,
 From Cambria's curse, from Cambria's tears !'
 Such were the sounds that o'er the crested pride
 Of the first Edward scatter'd wild dismay,
 As down the steep of Snowden's shaggy side²
 He wound with toilsome march his long array.
 Stout Gloster³ stood aghast in speechless trance :
 'To arms!' cried Mortimer,⁴ and couch'd his quivering lance.

I. 2.

On a rock, whose haughty brow
 Frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood,
 Robed in the sable garb of woe,
 With haggard eyes the poet stood :
 (Loose his beard, and hoary hair⁵
 Stream'd, like a meteor, to the troubled air)
 And with a master's hand, and prophet's fire,
 Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre.
 'Hark, how each giant-oak, and desert-cave,
 Sighs to the torrent's awful voice beneath !
 O'er thee, O king ! their hundred arms they wave,
 Revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs breathe ;

² Snowden was a name given by the Saxons to that mountainous tract which the Welsh themselves call *Craigian-cryri* : it included all the highlands of Caernarvonshire and Merionethshire, as far as the river Conway.

³ Gilbert de Clare, surnamed the Red, Earl of Gloucester and Hertford, son-in-law to King Edward.

⁴ Edmond de Mortimer, Lord of Wigmore. They both were *Lords Marchers*, whose lands lay on the borders of Wales, and probably accompanied the king in this expedition.

⁵ The image was taken from a well-known picture of Raphael, representing the Supreme Being in the vision of Ezekiel.

Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,
To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay.

I. 3.

' Cold is Cadwallo's tongue,
That hush'd the stormy main :
Brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed :
Mountains, ye mourn in vain
Modred, whose magic song
Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-topp'd head.
On dreary Arvon's shore⁶ they lie,
Smear'd with gore, and ghastly pale :
Far, far aloof the affrighted ravens sail ;
The famish'd eagle screams, and passes by.⁷
Dear lost companions of my tuneful art,
Dear as the light that visits these sad eyes,
Dear as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,
Ye died amidst your dying country's cries——
No more I weep. They do not sleep.
On yonder cliffs, a grisly band,
I see them sit, they linger yet,
Avengers of their native land :
With me in dreadful harmony they join,
And weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy line.

⁶ The shores of Caernarvonshire opposite to the isle of Anglesey.

⁷ Camden and others observe, that eagles used annually to build their aerie among the rocks of Snowden, which from thence, as some think, were named by the Welsh *Craigian-eryri*, or the crags of the eagles. At this day, I am told, the highest point of Snowden is called *the Eagle's Nest*. That bird is certainly no stranger to this island, as the Scots, and the people of Cumberland, Westmoreland, &c. can testify: it even has built its nest in the Peak of Derbyshire. (See Willoughby's *Ornithol.* published by Ray.)

II. 1.

' Weave the warp, and weave the woof,
 The winding-sheet of Edward's race ;
 Give ample room, and verge enough
 The characters of hell to trace.
 Mark the year, and mark the night,
 When Severn shall re-echo with affright
 The shrieks of death, through Berkeley's roof that
 ring,
 Shrieks of an agonizing king !⁸
 She-wolf of France,⁹ with unrelenting fangs,
 That tear'st the bowels of thy mangled mate :
 From thee be born,¹⁰ who o'er thy country hangs
 The scourge of Heaven. What terrors round him
 wait !
 Amazement in his van, with Flight combined,
 And Sorrow's faded form, and Solitude behind.

II. 2.

' Mighty victor, mighty lord,
 Low on his funeral couch he lies !
 No pitying heart, no eye, afford
 A tear to grace his obsequies.
 Is the sable warrior fled ?¹¹
 Thy son is gone, He rests among the dead.

⁸ Edward the Second, cruelly butchered in Berkeley-castle.

⁹ Isabel of France, Edward the Second's adulterous queen.

¹⁰ Triumphs of Edward the Third in France.

¹¹ Death of that king, abandoned by his children, and even robbed in his last moments by his courtiers and his mistress.

¹² Edward the Black Prince, dead some time before his father.

The swarm, that in thy noontide beam were born ?
 Gone to salute the rising Morn.
 Fair laughs the Morn,¹³ and soft the Zephyr blows,
 While proudly riding o'er the azure realm
 In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes ;
 Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm :
 Regardless of the sweeping Whirlwind's sway,
 That, hush'd in grim repose, expects his evening-
 prey.

II. 3

' Fill high the sparkling bowl,¹⁴
 The rich repast prepare ;
 Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast :
 Close by the regal chair
 Fell Thirst and Famine scowl
 A baleful smile upon their baffled guest.
 Heard ye the din of battle bray,¹⁵
 Lance to lance, and horse to horse ?
 Long years of havoc urge their destined course,
 And thro' the kindred squadrons mow their way.
 Ye towers of Julius,¹⁶ London's lasting shame,
 With many a foul and midnight murder fed,

¹³ Magnificence of Richard the Second's reign. See Froissart, and other contemporary writers.

¹⁴ Richard the Second, as we are told by Archbishop Scroop and the confederate lords, in their manifesto, by Thomas of Walsingham, and all the older writers, was starved to death. The story of his assassination, by Sir Piers of Exton, is of much later date.

¹⁵ Ruinous civil wars of York and Lancaster.

¹⁶ Henry the Sixth, George duke of Clarence, Edward the Fifth, Richard duke of York, &c. believed to be murdered secretly in the Tower of London. The oldest part of that structure is vulgarly attributed to Julius Cæsar.

Revere his consort's faith,¹⁷ his father's fame,¹⁸
 And spare the meek usurper's holy head.¹⁹
 Above, below, the rose of snow,²⁰

Twined with her blushing foe, we spread :
 The bristled Boar²¹ in infant gore

Wallows beneath the thorny shade.
 Now, brothers, bending o'er the accursed loom,
 Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom.

III. 1.

'Edward, lo ! to sudden fate
 (Weave we the woof. The thread is spun)
 Half of thy heart we consecrate.²²
 ('The web is wove. The work is done)
 Stay, O stay ! nor thus forlorn
 Leave me unblest'd, unpitied, here to mourn :
 In yon bright track, that fires the western skies,
 They melt, they vanish from my eyes,
 But O ! what solemn scenes on Snowden's height
 Descending slow their glittering skirts unroll !

¹⁷ Margaret of Anjou, a woman of heroic spirit, who struggled hard to save her husband and her crown.

¹⁸ Henry the Fifth.

¹⁹ Henry the Sixth, very near being canonized. The line of Lancaster had no right of inheritance to the crown.

²⁰ The white and red roses, devices of York and Lancaster.

²¹ The silver boar was the badge of Richard the Third ; whence he was usually known in his own time by the name of *the Boar*.

²² Eleanor of Castile died a few years after the conquest of Wales. The heroic proof she gave of her affection for her lord is well known. The monuments of his regret and sorrow for the loss of her are still to be seen at Northampton, Gaddington, Waltham, and other places.

Visions of glory, spare my aching sight !
 Ye unborn ages, crowd not on my soul !
 No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail.²³
 All-hail, ye genuine kings, Britannia's issue, hail !²⁴

III. 2.

' Girt with many a baron bold
 Sublime their starry fronts they rear ;
 And gorgeous dames, and statesmen old,
 In bearded majesty, appear.
 In the midst a form divine !
 Her eye proclaims her of the Briton-line ;
 Her lion-port, her awe-commanding face,²⁵
 Attemper'd sweet to virgin-grace.
 What strings symphonious tremble in the air !
 What strains of vocal transport round her play !
 Hear from the grave, great Talliessin,²⁶ hear ;
 They breathe a soul to animate thy clay.
 Bright Rapture calls, and, soaring as she sings,
 Waves in the eye of Heaven her many-colour'd
 wings.

²³ It was the common belief of the Welsh nation, that King Arthur was still alive in Fairy-land, and would return again to reign over Britain.

²⁴ Both Merlin and Talliessin had prophesied, that the Welsh should regain their sovereignty over this island ; which seemed to be accomplished in the house of Tudor.

²⁵ Speed, relating an audience given by Queen Elizabeth to Paul Dzialinski, ambassador of Poland, says, ' And thus she, lion-like rising, daunted the malapert orator no less with her stately port and majestical deporture, than with the tartness of her princelie checkes.'

²⁶ Talliessin, chief of the Bards, flourished in the sixth century. His works are still preserved, and his memory held in high veneration among his countrymen.

III. 3.

' The verse adorn again,
 Fierce War, and faithful Love,
 And Truth severe, by fairy Fiction dress'd.
 In buskin'd measures move²⁷
 Pale Grief, and pleasing Pain,
 With Horror, tyrant of the throbbing breast.
 A voice, as of the cherub-choir,²⁸
 Gales from blooming Eden bear :
 And distant warblings lessen on my ear,²⁹
 That lost in long futurity expire.
 Fond, impious Man, think'st thou yon sanguine
 cloud,
 Raised by thy breath, has quench'd the orb of day ?
 To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,
 And warms the nations with redoubled ray.
 Enough for me : with joy I see
 The different doom our fates assign.
 Be thine Despair, and sceptred Care,
 To triumph, and to die, are mine.'
 He spoke; and headlong from the mountain's height
 Deep in the roaring tide he plunged to endless night.

²⁷ Shakspeare.²⁸ Milton.²⁹ The succession of poets after Milton's time.

BEATTIE.

THE MINSTREL.

BOOK I.



**BEATTIE.
THE MINSTREL.
BOOK I.**



What dreadful pleasure! there to stand sublime,
Like shipwreck'd mariner on desert coast,

L. W. TALL, R.A. del.

W. G. G. G. G. G. G.

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BEATTIE.

—◆—
THE

MINSTREL:

OR,

THE PROGRESS OF GENIUS.


Me vero primum dulces ante omnia Musæ,
Quarum sacra fero, ingenti percussus amore,
Accipiant.

Virg.

BOOK I.

I.

AH! who can tell how hard it is to climb
The steep where Fame's proud temple shines afar?
Ah! who can tell how many a soul sublime
Has felt the influence of malignant star,
And waged with Fortune an eternal war?
Check'd by the scoff of Pride, by Envy's frown,
And Poverty's unconquerable bar,
In life's low vale remote has pined alone,
Then dropp'd into the grave, unpitied and unknown!



II.

And yet the languor of inglorious days
Not equally oppressive is to all ;
Him who ne'er listen'd to the voice of praise,
The silence of neglect can ne'er appal.
There are, who, deaf to mad Ambition's call,
Would shrink to hear the obstreperous trump of
fame ;
Supremely blest, if to their portion fall
Health, competence, and peace. Nor higher aim
Had he, whose simple tale these artless lines pro-
claim.

III.

The rolls of fame I will not now explore ;
Nor need I here describe, in learned lay,
How forth the Minstrel fared in days of yore,
Right glad of heart, though homely in array ;
His waving locks and beard all hoary grey :
While from his bending shoulder, decent hung
His harp, the sole companion of his way,
Which to the whistling wind responsive rung :
And ever as he went some merry lay he sung.

IV.

Fret not thyself, thou glittering child of pride,
That a poor villager inspires my strain ;
With thee let Pageantry and Power abide :
The gentle Muses haunt the silvan reign ;
Where through wild groves at eve the lonely swain
Enraptured roams, to gaze on Nature's charms :
They hate the sensual, and scorn the vain,
The parasite their influence never warms,
Nor him whose sordid soul the love of gold alarms.

V.

Though richest hues the peacock's plumes adorn,
Yet horror screams from his discordant throat.
Rise, sons of harmony, and hail the morn,
While warbling larks on russet pinions float :
Or seek at noon the woodland scene remote,
Where the grey linnets carol from the hill.
O let them ne'er, with artificial note,
To please a tyrant, strain the little bill,
But sing what Heaven inspires, and wander where
they will.

VI.

Liberal, not lavish, is kind Nature's hand ;
Nor was perfection made for man below :
Yet all her schemes with nicest art are plann'd ;
Good counteracting ill, and gladness woe.
With gold and gems if Chilian mountains glow ;
If bleak and barren Scotia's hills arise ;
There plague and poison, lust and rapine grow ;
Here peaceful are the vales, and pure the skies,
And freedom fires the soul, and sparkles in the
eyes.

VII.

Then grieve not, thou, to whom the indulgent Muse
Vouchsafes a portion of celestial fire :
Nor blame the partial Fates, if they refuse
The imperial banquet, and the rich attire.
Know thine own worth, and reverence the lyre.
Wilt thou debase the heart which God refined ?
No ; let thy heaven-taught soul to Heaven aspire,
To fancy, freedom, harmony, resign'd ;
Ambition's grovelling crew for ever left behind.

VIII.

Canst thou forego the pure ethereal soul
In each fine sense so exquisitely keen,
On the dull couch of Luxury to loll,
Stung with disease, and stupefied with spleen ;
Fain to implore the aid of Flattery's screen,
Ev'n from thyself thy loathsome heart to hide
(The mansion then no more of joy serene),
Where fear, distrust, malevolence, abide,
And impotent desire, and disappointed pride ?

IX.

O how canst thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms which Nature to her votary yields ?
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields ;
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of even,
All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of heaven,—
O how canst thou renounce, and hope to be for-
given ?

X.

These charms shall work thy soul's eternal health,
And love, and gentleness, and joy impart ;
But these thou must renounce, if lust of wealth
E'er win its way to thy corrupted heart :
For, ah ! it poisons like a scorpion's dart ;
Prompting the ungenerous wish, the selfish scheme,
The stern resolve unmoved by pity's smart,
The troublous day, and long distressful dream :
Return, my roving Muse, resume thy purposed theme.

XI.

There lived in Gothic days, as legends tell,
A shepherd swain, a man of low degree ;
Whose sires, perchance, in Fairyland might dwell,
Sicilian groves, or vales of Arcady ;
But he, I ween, was of the north countrie ;¹
A nation famed for song, and beauty's charms ;
Zealous, yet modest ; innocent, though free ;
Patient of toil ; serene amidst alarms ;
Inflexible in faith ; invincible in arms.

XII.

The shepherd-swain of whom I mention made,
On Scotia's mountains fed his little flock ;
The sickle, scythe, or plough, he never sway'd :
An honest heart was almost all his stock ;
His drink the living water from the rock :
The milky dams supplied his board, and lent
Their kindly fleece to baffle winter's shock ;
And he, though oft with dust and sweat besprent,
Did guide and guard their wanderings wheresoe'er
they went.

XIII.

From labour health, from health contentment
springs :
Contentment opes the source of every joy.
He envied not, he never thought of, kings ;
Nor from those appetites sustain'd annoy,
That chance may frustrate, or indulgence cloy :
Nor Fate his calm and humble hopes beguiled ;
He mourn'd no recreant friend nor mistress coy ;
For on his vows the blameless Phœbe smiled,
And her alone he loved, and loved her from a child.

XIV.


No jealousy their dawn of love o'ercast,
Nor blasted were their wedded days with strife;
Each season look'd delightful as it past,
To the fond husband, and the faithful wife.
Beyond the lowly vale of shepherd life
They never roam'd : secure beneath the storm
Which in Ambition's lofty land is rife,
Where peace and love are canker'd by the worm
Of pride, each bud of joy industrious to deform.

XV.

The wight, whose tale these artless lines unfold,
Was all the offspring of this humble pair :
His birth no oracle or seer foretold ;
No prodigy appear'd in earth or air,
Nor aught that might a strange event declare.
You guess each circumstance of Edwin's birth ;
The parent's transport, and the parent's care ;
The gossip's prayer. for wealth, and wit, and
worth ;
And one long summer-day of indolence and mirth.

XVI.

And yet poor Edwin was no vulgar boy :
Deep thought oft seem'd to fix his infant eye.
Dainties he heeded not, nor gaude, nor toy,
Save one short pipe of rudest minstrelsy :
Silent when glad ; affectionate, though shy ;
And now his look was most demurely sad ;
And now he laugh'd aloud, yet none knew why.
The neighbours stared and sigh'd, yet bless'd the
lad :
Some deem'd him wondrous wise, and some be-
lieved him mad.



. XVII.


But why should I his childish feats display ?
Concourse, and noise, and toil, he ever fled ;
Nor cared to mingle in the clamorous fray
Of squabbling imps ; but to the forest sped,
Or roam'd at large the lonely mountain's head,
Or, where the maze of some bewilder'd stream
To deep untrodden groves his footsteps led,
There would he wander wild, till Phœbus' beam,
Shot from the western cliff, released the weary team.

XVIII.

The exploit of strength, dexterity, or speed,
To him nor vanity nor joy-could bring.
His heart, from cruel sport estranged, would bleed
To work the woe of any living thing,
By trap or net, by arrow or by sling ;
These he detested, those he scorn'd to wield :
He wish'd to be the guardian, not the king,
Tyrant far less, or traitor of the field.
And sure the silvan reign unbloody joy might yield.

XIX.

Lo ! where the stripling, rapt in wonder, roves
Beneath the precipice o'erhung with pine ;
And sees, on high, amidst the encircling groves,
From cliff to cliff the foaming torrents shine :
While waters, woods, and winds, in concert join,
And Echo swells the chorus to the skies.
Would Edwin this majestic scene resign
For aught the huntsman's puny craft supplies ?
Ah ! no : he better knows great Nature's charms to
prize.



XX.

And oft he traced the uplands, to survey,
When o'er the sky advanced the kindling dawn
The crimson cloud, blue main, and mountains
 grey,
And lake, dim-gleaming on the smoky lawn;
Far to the west the long long vale withdrawn,
Where twilight loves to linger for awhile;
And now he faintly kens the bounding fawn,
And villager abroad at early toil.
But, lo! the Sun appears! and heaven, earth,
 ocean, smile.

XXI.

And oft the craggy cliff he loved to climb,
When all in mist the world below was lost.
What dreadful pleasure! there to stand sublime,
Like shipwreck'd mariner on desert coast,
And view the enormous waste of vapour; toss'd
In billows, lengthening to the horizon round,
Now scoop'd in gulfs, with mountains now emboss'd!
And hear the voice of mirth and song rebound,
Flocks, herds, and waterfalls, along the hoar profound!

XXII.

In truth, he was a strange and wayward wight,
Fond of each gentle, and each dreadful scene.
In darkness, and in storm, he found delight:
Nor less, than when on ocean-wave serene
The southern sun diffused his dazzling shene.*
Ev'n sad vicissitude amused his soul:
And if a sigh would sometimes intervene,
And down his cheek a tear of pity roll,
A sigh, a tear, so sweet, he wish'd not to control.

XXIII.

‘ O ye wild groves, O where is now your bloom? ’
(The Muse interprets thus his tender thought)

‘ Your flowers, your verdure, and your balmy
gloom,

Of late so grateful in the hour of drought ?

Why do the birds, that song and rapture brought

To all your bowers, their mansions now forsake ?

Ah ! why has fickle chance this ruin wrought ?

For now the storm howls mournful through the
brake,

And the dead foliage flies in many a shapeless flake.

XXIV.

‘ Where now the rill, melodious, pure, and cool,
And meads, with life, and mirth, and beauty
crown’d ?

Ah ! see, the unsightly slime, and sluggish pool,
Have all the solitary vale embrown’d ;

Fled each fair form, and mute each melting sound ;

The raven croaks forlorn on naked spray :

And, hark ! the river, bursting every mound,

Down the vale thunders, and with wasteful sway

Uproots the grove, and rolls the shatter’d rocks
away.

XXV.

‘ Yet such the destiny of all on earth :

So flourishes and fades majestic Man.

Fair is the bud his vernal morn brings forth,

And fostering gales awhile the nursling fan.

O smile, ye heavens, serene ; ye mildews wan,

Ye blighting whirlwinds, spare his balmy prime,

Nor lessen of his life the little span.

Borne on the swift, though silent wings of Time,
Old age comes on apace to ravage all the clime.

XXVI.

' And be it so. Let those deplore their doom,
Whose hope still grovels in this dark sojourn :
But lofty souls, who look beyond the tomb,
Can smile at Fate, and wonder how they mourn.
Shall Spring to these sad scenes no more return ?
Is yonder wave the sun's eternal bed ?
Soon shall the orient with new lustre burn,
And Spring shall soon her vital influence shed,
Again attune the grove, again adorn the mead.

XXVII.

' Shall I be left forgotten in the dust,
When Fate, relenting, lets the flower revive ?
Shall Nature's voice, to man alone unjust,
Bid him, though doom'd to perish, hope to live ?
Is it for this fair Virtue oft must strive
With disappointment, penury, and pain ?
No : Heaven's immortal spring shall yet arrive,
And man's majestic beauty bloom again,
Bright through the eternal year of Love's triumphant
reign.'

XXVIII.

This truth sublime his simple sire had taught ;
In sooth, 'twas almost all the shepherd knew.
No subtile nor superfluous lore he sought,
Nor ever wish'd his Edwin to pursue.
' Let man's own sphere,' said he, ' confine his
view ;
Be man's peculiar work his sole delight.'
And much, and oft, he warn'd him to eschew
Falsehood and guile, and aye maintain the right,
By pleasure unseduced, unawed by lawless might.

XXIX.

‘ And from the prayer of Want, and plaint of Woe,
O never, never turn away thine ear !
Forlorn, in this bleak wilderness below,
Ah ! what were man, should Heaven refuse to hear ?
To others do (the law is not severe)
What to thyself thou wishest to be done.
Forgive thy foes ; and love thy parents dear,
And friends, and native land ; nor those alone :
All human weal and woe learn thou to make thine
own.’

XXX.

See, in the rear of the warm sunny shower,
The visionary boy from shelter fly ;
For now the storm of summer-rain is o’er,
And cool, and fresh, and fragrant is the sky.
And, lo ! in the dark east, expanded high,
The rainbow brightens to the setting sun !
Fond fool, that deem’st the streaming glory nigh,
How vain the chace thine ardour has begun !
’Tis fled afar, ere half thy purposed race be run.

XXXI.

Yet couldst thou learn that thus it fares with age,
When pleasure, wealth, or power the bosom warm,
This baffled hope might tame thy manhood’s rage,
And Disappointment of her sting disarm.
But why should foresight thy fond heart alarm ?
Perish the lore that deadens young desire !
Pursue, poor imp, the imaginary charm ;
Indulge gay hope, and fancy’s pleasing fire :
Fancy and hope too soon shall of themselves ex-
pire.

XXXII.

When the long-sounding curfew from afar
Loaded with loud lament the lonely gale,
Young Edwin, lighted by the evening star,
Lingering and listening, wander'd down the vale.
There would he dream of graves, and corpses pale;
And ghosts that to the charnel-dungeon throng,
And drag a length of clanking chain, and wail,
Till silenced by the owl's terrific song,
Or blast that shrieks by fits the shuddering isles
along.

XXXIII.

Or when the setting Moon, in crimson dyed,
Hung o'er the dark and melancholy deep,
To haunted stream, remote from man, he hied,
Where fays of yore their revels wont to keep;
And there let Fancy rove at large, till sleep
A vision brought to his entranced sight:
And first, a wildly murmuring wind 'gan creep
Shrill to his ringing ear; then tapers bright,
With instantaneous gleam, illumed the vault of night.

XXXIV.

Anon in view a portal's blazon'd arch
Arose: the trumpet bids the valves unfold;
And forth a host of little warriors march,
Grasping the diamond lance, and targe of gold.
Their look was gentle, their demeanour bold,
And green their helms, and green their silk attire;
And here and there, right venerably old,
The long-robed minstrels wake the warbling wire,
And some with mellow breath the martial pipe in-
spire.

XXXV.


With merriment, and song, and timbrels clear,
A troop of dames from myrtle bowers advance ;
The little warriors doff the targe and spear,
And loud enlivening strains provoke the dance.
They meet, they dart away, they wheel askance ;
To right, to left, they thrid the flying maze ;
Now bound aloft with vigorous spring, then glance
Rapid along : with many-colour'd rays
Of tapers, gems, and gold, the echoing forests
blaze.

XXXVI.

The dream is fled. Proud harbinger of day,
Who scaredst the vision with thy clarion shrill,
Fell chanticleer ! who oft hath reft away
My fancied good, and brought substantial ill !
O to thy cursed scream, discordant still,
Let Harmony aye shut her gentle ear !
Thy boastful mirth let jealous rivals spill,
Insult thy crest, and glossy pinions tear,
And ever in thy dreams the ruthless fox appear.

XXXVII.

Forbear, my Muse. Let love attune thy line.
Revoke the spell. Thine Edwin frets not so.
For how should he at wicked chance repine,
Who feels from every change amusement flow ?
Ev'n now his eyes with smiles of rapture glow,
As on he wanders through the scenes of morn,
Where the fresh flowers in living lustre blow,
Where thousand pearls the dewy lawns adorn,
A thousand notes of joy in every breeze are borne.



XXXVIII.

But who the melodies of morn can tell ?
The wild brook babbling down the mountain side ;
The lowing herd ; the sheepfold's simple bell ;
The pipe of early shepherd dim descried
In the lone valley ; echoing far and wide,
The clamorous horn along the cliffs above ;
The hollow murmur of the ocean-tide ;
The hum of bees, the linnet's lay of love,
And the full choir that wakes the universal grove ?

XXXIX.

The cottage curs at early pilgrim bark ;
Crown'd with her pail the tripping milkmaid sings ;
The whistling ploughman stalks a-field ; and, hark !
Down the rough slope the ponderous waggon rings ;
Through rustling corn the hare astonish'd springs ;
Slow tolls the village clock the drowsy hour ;
The partridge bursts away on whirring wings ;
Deep mourns the turtle in sequester'd bower ;
And shrill lark carols clear from her ærial tour.

XL.

O Nature, how in every charm supreme !
Whose votaries feast on raptures ever new !
O for the voice and fire of seraphim,
To sing thy glories with devotion due !
Blest be the day I 'scaped the wrangling crew,
From Pyrrho's maze, and Epicurus' sty ;
And held high converse with the godlike few,
Who to the enraptured heart, and ear, and eye,
Teach beauty, virtue, truth, and love, and me-
lody.



XLI.

Hence! ye who snare and stupefy the mind,
Sophists, of beauty, virtue, joy, the bane!
Greedy and fell, though impotent and blind,
Who spread your filthy nets in Truth's fair fane,
And ever ply your venom'd fangs amain!
Hence to dark Error's den, whose rankling slime
First gave you form! Hence! lest the Muse should
deign

(Though loath on theme so mean to waste a rhyme)
With vengeance to pursue your sacrilegious crime.

XLII.

But hail, ye mighty masters of the lay,
Nature's true sons, the friends of man and truth!
Whose song, sublimely sweet, serenely gay,
Amused my childhood, and inform'd my youth.
O let your spirit still my bosom soothe,
Inspire my dreams, and my wild wanderings
guide:

Your voice each rugged path of life can smoothe;
For well I know, wherever ye reside,
There harmony, and peace, and innocence abide.

XLIII.

Ah me! neglected on the lonesome plain,
As yet poor Edwin never knew your lore,
Save when against the winter's drenching rain,
And driving snow, the cottage shut the door.
Then, as instructed by tradition hoar,
Her legends when the beldam 'gan impart,
Or chant the old heroic ditty o'er,
Wonder and joy ran thrilling to his heart:
Much he the tale admired, but more the tuneful art.

XLVII.

A stifled smile of stern vindictive joy
Brighten'd one moment Edwin's starting tear.—
' But why should gold man's feeble mind decoy,
And innocence thus die by doom severe?'
O Edwin! while thy heart is yet sincere,
The assaults of discontent and doubt repel:
Dark ev'n at noontide is our mortal sphere.
But let us hope; to doubt is to rebel:
Let us exult in hope that all shall yet be well.

XLVIII.

Nor be thy generous indignation check'd,
Nor check'd the tender tear to Misery given:
From Guilt's contagious power shall that protect;
This soften and refine the soul for heaven.
But dreadful is their doom, whom doubt has driven
To censure Fate, and pious Hope forego:
Like yonder blasted boughs by lightning riven,
Perfection, beauty, life, they never know,
But frown on all that pass, a monument of woe.

XLIX.

Shall he, whose birth, maturity, and age,
Scarce fill the circle of one summer-day;—
Shall the poor gnat, with discontent and rage,
Exclaim that nature hastens to decay,
If but a cloud obstruct the solar ray,
If but a momentary shower descend?
Or shall frail man Heaven's dread decree gainsay,
Which bade the series of events extend
Wide through unnumber'd worlds, and ages with-
out end?

L.

One part, one little part, we dimly scan
Through the dark medium of life's feverish dream;
Yet dare arraign the whole stupendous plan,
If but that little part incongruous seem.
Nor is that part perhaps what mortals deem :
Oft from apparent ills our blessings rise.
O then renounce that impious self-esteem,
That aims to trace the secrets of the skies ;
For thou art but of dust ; be humble, and be wise.

LI.

Thus Heaven enlarged his soul in riper years.
For Nature gave him strength, and fire, to soar
On Fancy's wing above this vale of tears ;
Where dark cold-hearted sceptics, creeping, pore
Through microscope of metaphysic lore :
And much they grope for Truth, but never hit.
For why ? Their powers, inadequate before,
This idle art makes more and more unfit ;
Yet deem they darkness light, and their vain blunders wit.

LII.

Nor was this ancient dame a foe to mirth :
Her ballad, jest, and riddle's quaint device
Oft cheer'd the shepherds round their social hearth ;
Whom levity or spleen could ne'er entice
To purchase chat, or laughter, at the price
Of decency. Nor let it faith exceed,
That Nature forms a rustic taste so nice.
Ah ! had they been of court or city breed,
Such delicacy were right marvellous indeed.

LIII.

Oft, when the winter storm had ceased to rave,
He roam'd the snowy waste at even, to view
The cloud stupendous, from the Atlantic wave
High-towering, sail along the horizon blue;
Where, midst the changeful scenery, ever new,
Fancy a thousand wondrous forms describes,
More wildly great than ever pencil drew :
Rocks, torrents, gulfs, and shapes of giant size,
And glittering cliffs on cliffs, and fiery ramparts, rise.

LIV.

Thence musing onward to the sounding shore,
The lone enthusiast oft would take his way,
Listening, with pleasing dread, to the deep roar
Of the wide-weltering waves. In black array
When sulphurous clouds roll'd on the autumnal day,
Ev'n then he hasten'd from the haunt of man,
Along the trembling wilderness to stray,
What time the lightning's fierce career began,
And o'er heaven's rending arch the rattling thunder
ran.

LV.

Responsive to the sprightly pipe, when all
In sprightly dance the village youth were join'd,
Edwin, of melody aye held in thrall,
From the rude gambol far remote reclined,
Soothed with the soft notes warbling in the wind.
Ah then, all jollity seem'd noise and folly
'To the pure soul by Fancy's fire refined.
Ah, what is mirth but turbulence unholy,
When with the charm compared of heavenly melan-
choly ?

LVI.

Is there a heart that music cannot melt ?
Alas ! how is that rugged heart forlorn !
Is there, who ne'er those mystic transports felt,
Of solitude and melancholy born ?
He needs not woo the Muse : he is her scorn.
The sophist's rope of cobweb he shall twine ;
Mope o'er the schoolman's peevish page ; or
mourn,
And delve for life in Mammon's dirty mine :
Sneak with the scoundrel fox, or grunt with glutton
swine.

LVII.

For Edwin Fate a nobler doom had plann'd :
Song was his favourite and first pursuit :
The wild harp rang to his adventurous hand,
And languish'd to his breath the plaintive flute.
His infant Muse, though artless, was not mute :
Of elegance as yet he took no care ;
For this of time and culture is the fruit :
And Edwin gain'd at last this fruit so rare ;
As in some future verse I purpose to declare.

LVIII.

Meanwhile, whate'er of beautiful or new,
Sublime or dreadful, in earth, sea, or sky,
By chance, or search, was offer'd to his view,
He scann'd with curious and romantic eye.
Whate'er of lore tradition could supply
From Gothic tale, or song, or fable old,
Roused him, still keen to listen and to pry.
At last, though long by penury controll'd,
And solitude, his soul her graces 'gan unfold.

LIX.

Thus on the chill Lapponian's dreary land,
For many a long month lost in snow profound,
When Sol from Cancer sends the season bland,
And in their northern cave the storms are bound;
From silent mountains, straight, with startling
 sound,
Torrents are hurl'd; green hills emerge; and lo,
The trees with foliage, cliffs with flowers are
 crown'd;
Pure rills through vales of verdure warbling go;
And wonder, love, and joy, the peasant's heart
 o'erflow.⁵

LX.

Here pause, my Gothic lyre, a little while:
The leisure hour is all that thou canst claim.
But on this verse if Montague should smile,
New strains ere long shall animate thy frame:
And her applause to me is more than fame;
/ For still with truth accords her taste refined.
At lucre or renown let others aim;
I only wish to please the gentle mind,
Whom Nature's charms inspire, and love of human
 kind.

NOTES TO BOOK I.

¹ There is hardly an ancient ballad, or romance, wherein a Minstrel or a Harper appears, but he is characterised, by way of eminence, to have been "of the north countrie." It is probable, that under this appellation were formerly comprehended all the provinces to the north of the Trent. See Percy's Essay on the English Minstrels.

² Brightness, splendour. The word is used by some late writers, as well as by Milton.

³ Allusion to Shakspeare.

Macbeth. How now, ye secret, black, and midnight hags,
What is't ye do?

Witches. A deed without a name.
Macbeth, Act IV. Scene 1.

⁴ See the fine old ballad, called The Children in the Wood.

⁵ Spring and autumn are hardly known to the Laplanders. About the time the sun enters Cancer, their fields, which a week before were covered with snow, appear on a sudden full of grass and flowers.

Schaffer's History of Lapland, p. 16.



BEATTIE.

THE MINSTREL.

BOOK II.



BEATTIE.
THE MINSTREL
BOOK II.



Then reach'd the wild, where in a flowery nook,
And seated on a mossy stone, he spied
An ancient man : —

Long Gibbon &c.



BEATTIE.



THE

MINSTREL:

OR,

THE PROGRESS OF GENIUS.

*Doctrina sed vim promovet insitam,
Rectique cultus pectora roborant.*

Horat.

BOOK II.

I.

OF chance or change, O let not man complain,
Else shall he never, never cease to wail;
For, from the imperial dome, to where the swain
Rears the lone cottage in the silent dale,
All feel the assault of Fortune's fickle gale:
Art, empire, Earth itself, to change are doom'd;
Earthquakes have raised to heaven the humble vale,
And gulfs the mountain's mighty mass entomb'd;
And where the Atlantic rolls wide continents have
bloom'd.¹

II.

But sure to foreign climes we need not range,
 Nor search the ancient records of our race,
 To learn the dire effects of time and change,
 Which in ourselves, alas! we daily trace.
 Yet at the darken'd eye, the wither'd face,
 Or hoary hair, I never will repine :
 But spare, O Time, whate'er of mental grace,
 Of candour, love, or sympathy divine,
 Whate'er of fancy's ray, or friendship's flame, is
 mine.

III.

So I, obsequious to Truth's dread command,
 Shall here without reluctance change my lay,
 And smite the Gothic lyre with harsher hand ;
 Now when I leave that flowery path for aye,
 Of childhood, where I sported many a day,
 Warbling and sauntering carelessly along ;
 Where every face was innocent and gay,
 Each vale romantic, tuneful every tongue,
 Sweet, wild, and artless all, as Edwin's infant song.

IV.

' Perish the lore that deadens young desire,'
 Is the soft tenor of my song no more.
 Edwin, though loved of Heaven, must not aspire
 To bliss, which mortals never knew before.
 On trembling wings let youthful fancy soar,
 Nor always haunt the sunny realms of joy :
 But now and then the shades of life explore ;
 ' Though many a sound and sight of woe annoy,
 And many a qualm of care his rising hopes destroy.

V.

Vigour from toil, from trouble patience grows.
The weakly blossom, warm in summer bower,
Some tints of transient beauty may disclose:
But soon it withers in the chilling hour.
Mark yonder oaks ! Superior to the power
Of all the warring winds of heaven they rise,
And from the stormy promontory tower,
And toss their giant arms amid the skies,
While each assailing blast increase of strength supplies.

VI.

And now the downy cheek and deepen'd voice
Gave dignity to Edwin's blooming prime ;
And walks of wider circuit were his choice,
And vales more wild, and mountains more sublime.
One evening, as he framed the careless rhyme,
It was his chance to wander far abroad,
And o'er a lonely eminence to climb,
Which heretofore his foot had never trode ;
A vale appear'd below, a deep retired abode.

VII.

Thither he hied, enamour'd of the scene :
For rocks on rocks piled, as by magic spell,
Here scorch'd with lightning, there with ivy green,
Fenced from the north and east this savage dell.
Southward a mountain rose with easy swell,
Whose long long groves eternal murmur made :
And toward the western sun a streamlet fell,
Where, through the cliffs, the eye, remote, survey'd
Blue hills, and glittering waves, and skies in gold array'd.

XI.


' Vain man ! is grandeur given to gay attire ?
Then let the butterfly thy pride upbraid :
To friends, attendants, armies bought with hire ?
It is thy weakness that requires their aid .
To palaces, with gold and gems inlaid ?
They fear the thief, and tremble in the storm :
To hosts, through carnage who to conquest wade ?
Behold the victor vanquish'd by the worm !
Behold, what deeds of woe the locust can perform !

XII.

' True dignity is his, whose tranquil mind
Virtue has raised above the things below ;
Who, every hope and fear to Heaven resign'd,
Shrinks not, though Fortune aim her deadliest
 blow.'
This strain from midst the rocks was heard to flow,
In solemn sounds. Now beam'd the evening star ;
And from embattled clouds emerging slow
Cynthia came riding on her silver car ;
And hoary mountain-cliffs shone faintly from afar.

XIII.

Soon did the solemn voice its theme renew :
(While Edwin rapt in wonder listening stood)
' Ye tools and toys of tyranny, adieu,
Scorn'd by the wise and hated by the good !
Ye only can engage the servile brood
Of Levy and Lust, who all their days,
Ashamed of truth and liberty, have woo'd
And hugg'd the chain, that, glittering on their gaze,
Seems to outshine the pomp of heaven's empyreal
 blaze.



XIV.

' Like them, abandon'd to Ambition's sway,
I sought for glory in the paths of guile ;
And fawn'd and smiled, to plunder and betray,
Myself betray'd and plunder'd all the while.
So gnaw'd the viper the corroding file :
But now, with pangs of keen remorse, I rue
Those years of trouble and debasement vile.
Yet why should I this cruel theme pursue ?
Fly, fly, detested thoughts, for ever from my view !

XV.

' The gusts of appetite, the clouds of care,
And storms of disappointment, all o'erpast,
Henceforth no earthly hope with Heaven shall share
This heart, where peace serenely shines at last :
And if for me no treasure be amass'd,
And if no future age shall hear my name,
I lurk the more secure from fortune's blast,
And with more leisure feed this pious flame,
Whose rapture far transcends the fairest hopes of
fame.

XVI.

' The end and the reward of toil is rest :
Be all my prayer for virtue and for peace :
Of wealth and fame, of pomp and power possess'd,
Who ever felt his weight of woe decrease ?
Ah ! what avails the lore of Rome and Greece,
The lay heaven-prompted, and harmonious string,
The dust of Ophir, or the Tyrian fleece,
All that art, fortune, enterprise, can bring,
If envy, scorn, remorse, or pride the bosom wring ?

XVII.


' Let Vanity adorn the marble tomb
With trophies, rhymes, and scutcheons of renown,
In the deep dungeon of some Gothic dome,
Where night and desolation ever frown.
Mine be the breezy hill that skirts the down,
Where a green grassy turf is all I crave,
With here and there a violet bestrown,
Fast by a brook or fountain's murmuring wave ;
And many an evening sun shine sweetly on my grave.

XVIII.

' And thither let the village swain repair ;
And, light of heart, the village maiden gay,
To deck with flowers her half-dishevell'd hair,
And celebrate the merry morn of May.
There let the shepherd's pipe the live-long day
Fill all the grove with love's bewitching woe ;
And when mild Evening comes in mantle gray,
Let not the blooming band make haste to go :
No ghost, nor spell, my long and last abode shall
know.

XIX.

' For though I fly to 'scape from Fortune's rage,
And bear the scars of envy, spite, and scorn,
Yet with mankind no horrid war I wage,
Yet with no impious spleen my breast is torn :
For virtue lost, and ruin'd man, I mourn.
O man ! creation's pride, Heaven's darling child,
Whom Nature's best, divinest gifts adorn,
Why from thy home are truth and joy exiled,
And all thy favourite haunts with blood and tears
defiled ?



XX.

' Along yon glittering sky what glory streams !
 What majesty attends Night's lovely queen !
 Fair lough our valleys in the vernal beams,
 And mountains rise, and oceans roll between,
 And all conspire to beautify the scene.
 But, in the mental world, what chaos drear !
 What forms of mournful, loathsome, furious men !
 O when shall that eternal morn appear,
 These dreadful forms to chase, this chaos dark to
 clear ?

XXI.

' O Thou, at whose creative smile, yon heaven,
 In all the pomp of beauty, life, and light,
 Rose from the abyss ; when dark Confusion driven
 Down, down the bottomless profound of night,
 Fled, where he ever flies thy piercing sight !
 O glance on these sad shades one pitying ray,
 To blast the fury of oppressive might,
 Melt the hard heart to love and mercy's sway,
 And cheer the wandering soul, and light him on the
 way !'

XXII.

Silence ensued ; and Edwin raised his eyes
 In tears, for grief lay heavy at his heart.
 ' And is it thus in courtly life,' he cries,
 ' That man to man acts a betrayer's part ?
 And dares he thus the gifts of Heaven pervert,
 Each social instinct, and sublime desire ?
 Hail Poverty ! if honour, wealth, and art—
 If what the great pursue, and learn'd admire—
 Thus dissipate and quench the soul's ethereal fire !'

XXIII.


He said, and turn'd away ; nor did the sage
O'erhear, in silent orisons employ'd.
The youth, his rising sorrow to assuage,
Home as he hied, the evening scene enjoy'd :
For now no cloud obscures the starry void ;
The yellow moonlight sleeps on all the hills ;
Nor is the mind with startling sounds annoy'd :
A soothing murmur the lone region fills,
Of groves, and dying gales, and melancholy rills.

XXIV.

But he from day to day more anxious grew ;
The voice still seem'd to vibrate on his ear :
Nor durst he hope the hermit's tale untrue ;
For man he seem'd to love, and Heaven to fear ;
And none speaks false, where there is none to hear.
' Yet, can man's gentle heart become so fell ?
No more in vain conjecture let me wear
My hours away, but seek the hermit's cell :
'Tis he my doubt can clear, perhaps my care dispel.'

XXV.

At early dawn the youth his journey took,
And many a mountain pass'd and valley wide,
Then reach'd the wild ; where, in a flowery nook,
And seated on a mossy stone, he spied
An ancient man : his harp lay him beside.
A stag sprang from the pasture at his call,
And, kneeling, lick'd the wither'd hand that tied
A wreath of woodbine round his antlers tall,
And hung his lofty neck with many a floweret small.



XXVI.

And now the hoary sage arose, and saw
The wanderer approaching : innocence
Smiled on his glowing cheek, but modest awe
Depress'd his eye, that fear'd to give offence.
' Who art thou, courteous stranger? and from
whence ?
Why roam thy steps to this sequester'd dale ?'
' A shepherd-boy,' the youth replied ; ' far hence
My habitation—hear my artless tale ;
Nor levity nor falsehood shall thine ear assail.

XXVII.

' Late as I roam'd, intent on Nature's charms,
I reach'd at eve this wilderness profound ;
And, leaning where yon oak expands her arms,
Heard these rude cliffs thine awful voice rebound
(For in thy speech I recognise the sound).
You mourn'd for ruin'd man, and virtue lost,
And seem'd to feel of keen remorse the wound,
Pondering on former days by guilt engross'd,
Or in the giddy storm of dissipation toss'd.

XXVIII.

' But say, in courtly life can craft be learn'd,
Where knowledge opens and exalts the soul ?
Where Fortune lavishes her gifts unearn'd,
Can selfishness the liberal heart control ?
Is glory there achieved by arts, as foul
As those that felons, fiends, and furies plan ?
Spiders ensnare, snakes poison, tigers prowl :
Love is the godlike attribute of man.
O teach a simple youth this mystery to scan ?

XXIX.

‘ Or else the lamentable strain disclaim,
And give me back the calm, contented mind;
Which, late exulting, view’d in Nature’s frame,
Goodness untainted, wisdom unconfined,
Grace, grandeur, and utility combined.
Restore those tranquil days, that saw me still
Well pleased with all, but most with human kind;
When Fancy roam’d through Nature’s works at
will,
Uncheck’d by cold distrust, and uninform’d of ill.’

XXX.

‘ Wouldst thou,’ the sage replied, ‘ in peace return
To the gay dreams of fond romantic youth,
Leave me to hide, in this remote sojourn,
From every gentle ear the dreadful truth:
For if my desultory strain with ruth
And indignation make thine eyes o’erflow,
Alas! what comfort could thy anguish soothe,
Shouldst thou the extent of human folly know!
Be ignorance thy choice, where knowledge leads to
woe.

XXXI.

‘ But let untender thoughts afar be driven;
Nor venture to arraign the dread decree.
For know, to man, as candidate for Heaven,
The voice of the Eternal said, “ Be free.”
And this divine prerogative to thee
Does virtue, happiness, and Heaven convey;
For virtue is the child of liberty,
And happiness of virtue; nor can they
Be free to keep the path, who are not free to

XXXII.

' Yet leave me not. I would allay that grief,
Which else might thy young virtue overpower,
And in thy converse I shall find relief,
When the dark shades of melancholy lower ;
For solitude has many a dreary hour,
Ev'n when exempt from grief, remorse, and pain :
Come often then ; for, haply, in my bower
Amusement, knowledge, wisdom thou mayst gain :
If I one soul improve, I have not lived in vain.'

XXXIII.

And now, at length, to Edwin's ardent gaze
The Muse of History unrolls her page.
But few, alas ! the scenes her art displays,
To charm his fancy, or his heart engage.
Here chiefs their thirst of power in blood assuage,
And straight their flames with tenfold fierceness
burn :
Here smiling Virtue prompts the patriot's rage,
But lo, ere long, is left alone to mourn,
And languish in the dust, and clasp the abandon'd
urn !

XXXIV.

' Ambition's slippery verge shall mortals tread,
Where ruin's gulf unfathom'd yawns beneath ?
Shall life, shall liberty be lost,' he said,
' For the vain toys that pomp and power bequeathe ?
The car of victory, the plume, the wreath,
Defend not from the bolt of fate the brave :
No note the clarion of renown can breathe,
To alarm the long night of the lonely grave,
Or check the headlong haste of time's o'erwhelming
wave.

XXXV.

' Ah, what avails it to have traced the springs,
That whirl of empire the stupendous wheel ?
Ah, what have I to do with conquering kings,
Hands drench'd in blood, and breasts begirt with
steel ?


To those, whom Nature taught to think and feel,
Heroes, alas ! are things of small concern.
Could History man's secret heart reveal,
And what imports a heaven-born mind to learn,
Her transcripts to explore what bosom would not
yearn ?

XXXVI.

' This praise, O Cheronean sage,³ is thine !
(Why should this praise to thee alone belong ?)
All else from Nature's moral path decline,
Lured by the toys that captivate the throng ;
To herd in cabinets and camps, among
Spoil, carnage, and the cruel pomp of pride ;
Or chant of heraldry the drowsy song,
How tyrant blood, o'er many a region wide,
Rolls to a thousand thrones its execrable tide.

XXXVII.

' O who of man the story will unfold,
Ere victory and empire wrought annoy,
In that Elysian age (misnamed of gold),
The age of love, and innocence, and joy,
When all were great and free ! man's sole employ
To deck the bosom of his parent earth ;
Or toward his bower the murmuring stream decoy,
To aid the floweret's long-expected birth,
And lull the bed of peace, and crown the board of
mirth.



XXXVIII.

' Sweet were your shades, O ye primeval groves !
 Whose boughs to man his food and shelter lent,
 Pure in his pleasures, happy in his loves,
 His eye still smiling, and his heart content.
 Then hand in hand health, sport, and labour went.
 Nature supplied the wish she taught to crave :
 None prowl'd for prey, none watch'd to circumvent ;
 To all an equal lot Heaven's bounty gave :
 No vassal fear'd his lord, no tyrant fear'd his slave.

XXXIX.

' But ah ! the Historic Muse has never dared
 To pierce those hallow'd bowers : 'tis Fancy's beam,
 Pour'd on the vision of the enraptured bard,
 That paints the charms of that delicious theme.
 Then hail, sweet Fancy's ray ! and hail the dream
 That weans the weary soul from guilt and woe !
 Careless what others of my choice may deem,
 I long, where Love and Fancy lead, to go
 And meditate on Heaven ; enough of earth I know.'

XL.

' I cannot blame thy choice,' the sage replied,
 ' For soft and smooth are Fancy's flowery ways :
 And yet, ev'n there, if left without a guide,
 The young adventurer unsafely plays.
 Eyes dazzled long by fiction's gaudy rays
 In modest truth no light nor beauty find.
 And who, my child, would trust the meteor-blaze,
 That soon must fail, and leave the wanderer blind,
 More dark and helpless far, than if it ne'er had
 shined ?

XLI.

' Fancy enervates, while it soothes, the heart,
And, while it dazzles, wounds the mental sight :
To joy each heightening charm it can impart,
But wraps the hour of woe in tenfold night :
And often, where no real ills affright,
Its visionary fiends, an endless train,
Assail with equal or superior might,
And through the throbbing heart, and dizzy brain,
And shivering nerves, shoot stings of more than
mortal pain.

XLII.

' And yet, alas ! the real ills of life
Claim the full vigour of a mind prepared,
Prepared for patient, long, laborious strife,
Its guide experience, and truth its guard.
We fare on earth as other men have fared.
Were they successful ? Let not us despair.
Was disappointment oft their sole reward ?
Yet shall their tale instruct, if it declare
How they have borne the load ourselves are doom'd
to bear.

XLIII.

' What charms the Historic Muse adorn, from spoils,
And blood, and tyrants, when she wings her flight,
To hail the patriot prince, whose pious toils,
Sacred to science, liberty, and right,
And peace, through every age divinely bright
Shall shine, the boast and wonder of mankind !
Sees yonder sun, from his meridian height,
A lovelier scene, than virtue thus enshrined
In power, and man with man for mutual aid com-
bined ?

XLIV.

‘ Hail sacred Polity, by Freedom rear’d !
Hail sacred Freedom, when by law restrain’d !
Without you what were man ? A grovelling herd,
In darkness, wretchedness, and want enchain’d.
Sublimed by you, the Greek and Roman reign’d
In arts unrivall’d. O, to latest days,
In Albion may your influence unprofaned,
To godlike worth the generous bosom raise,
And prompt the sage’s lore, and fire the poet’s lays !

XLV.

‘ But now let other themes our care engage.
For lo, with modest yet majestic grace,
To curb Imagination’s lawless rage,
And from within the cherish’d heart to brace,
Philosophy appears ! The gloomy race
By Indolence and moping Fancy bred,
Fear, Discontent, Solitude, give place,
And Hope and Courage brighten in their stead,
While on the kindling soul her vital beams are shed.

XLVI.

‘ Then waken from long lethargy to life⁴
The seeds of happiness, and powers of thought ;
Then jarring appetites forego their strife,
A strife by ignorance to madness wrought.
Pleasure by savage man is dearly bought
With fell revenge, lust that defies control,
With gluttony and death. The mind untaught
Is a dark waste, where fiends and tempests howl .
As Phœbus to the world, is science to the soul.

XLVII.


‘And Reason now, through number, time, and space,
Darts the keen lustre of her serious eye,
And learns, from facts compared, the laws to trace,
Whose long progression leads to Deity.
Can mortal strength presume to soar so high ?
Can mortal sight, so oft bedimm’d with tears,
Such glory bear ?—for lo, the shadows fly
From Nature’s face ; Confusion disappears,
And Order charms the eye, and Harmony the ears !

XLVIII.

‘In the deep windings of the grove, no more
The hag obscene and grisly phantom dwell ;
Nor in the fall of mountain-stream, or roar
Of winds, is heard the angry spirit’s yell :
No wizard mutters the tremendous spell,
Nor sinks convulsive in prophetic swoon ;
Nor bids the noise of drums and trumpets swell,
To ease of fancied pangs the labouring Moon,
Or chase the shade that blots the blazing orb of noon.

XLIX.

‘Many a long-lingering year, in lonely isle,
Stunn’d with the eternal turbulence of waves,
Lo, with dim eyes, that never learn’d to smile,
And trembling hands, the famish’d native craves
Of Heaven his wretched fare ; shivering in caves,
Or scorch’d on rocks, he pines from day to day ;
But Science gives the word, and lo, he braves
The surge and tempest, lighted by her ray,
And to a happier land wafts merrily away !



L.

‘ And ev’n where Nature loads the teeming plain
With the full pomp of vegetable store,
Her bounty, unimproved, is deadly bane :
Dark woods and rankling wilds, from shore to
shore
Stretch their enormous gloom, which to explore
Ev’n Fancy trembles, in her sprightliest mood ;
For there each eye-ball gleams with lust of gore,
Nestles each murderous and each monstrous brood,
Plague lurks in every shade, and steams from every
flood.

LI.

‘ ‘Twas from Philosophy man learn’d to tame
The soil, by plenty to intemperance fed.
Lo, from the echoing axe, and thundering flame,
Poison and plague and yelling rage are fled !
The waters, bursting from their slimy bed,
Bring health and melody to every vale :
And, from the breezy main, and mountain’s head,
Ceres and Flora, to the sunny dale,
To fan their glowing charms, invite the fluttering
gale.

LII.

‘ What dire necessities on every hand
Our art, our strength, our fortitude require !
Of foes intestine what a numerous band
Against this little throb of life conspire !
Yet Science can elude their fatal ire
Awhile, and turn aside Death’s level’d dart,
Soothe the sharp pang, allay the fever’s fire,
And brace the nerves once more, and cheer the heart,
And yet a few soft nights and balmy days impart.

LIII.


‘ Nor less to regulate man’s moral frame
Science exerts her all-composing sway.
Flutters thy breast with fear, or pants for fame,
Or pines, to indolence and spleen a prey,
Or avarice, a fiend more fierce than they?
Flee to the shades of Academus’ grove;
Where cares molest not, discord melts away
In harmony, and the pure passions prove
How sweet the words of Truth, breathed from the
lips of Love.

LIV.

‘ What cannot Art and Industry perform,
When Science plans the progress of their toil?
They smile at penury, disease, and storm;
And oceans from their mighty mounds recoil.
When tyrants scourge, or demagogues embroil
A land, or when the rabble’s headlong rage
Order transforms to anarchy and spoil;
Deep versed in man, the philosophic sage
Prepares with lenient hand their frenzy to assuage.

LV.

‘ ’Tis he alone, whose comprehensive mind,
From situation, temper, soil, and clime
Explored, a nation’s various powers can bind,
And various orders, in one form sublime
Of policy, that midst the wrecks of time,
Secure shall lift its head on high, nor fear
The assault of foreign or domestic crime,
While public faith, and public love sincere,
And industry and law, maintain their sway severe.’



LVI.

Enraptured by the hermit's strain, the youth
 Proceeds the path of Science to explore.
 And now, expanded to the beams of truth,
 New energies, and charms unknown before,
 His mind discloses : Fancy now no more
 Wantons on fickle pinion through the skies ;
 But, fix'd in aim, and conscious of her power,
 Aloft from cause to cause exults to rise,
 Creation's blended stores arranging as she flies.

LVII.

Nor love of novelty alone inspires,
 Their laws and nice dependencies to scan ;
 For, mindful of the aids that life requires,
 And of the services man owes to man,
 He meditates new arts on Nature's plan ;
 The cold desponding breast of sloth to warm,
 The flame of industry and genius fan,
 And emulation's noble rage alarm,
 And the long hours of toil and solitude to charm.

LVIII.

But she, who set on fire his infant heart,
 And all his dreams, and all his wanderings shared
 And bless'd, the Muse, and her celestial art,
 Still claim the enthusiast's fond and first regard.
 From Nature's beauties variously compared
 And variously combined, he learns to frame
 Those forms of bright perfection, which the bard,
 While boundless hopes and boundless views in-
 flame,
 Enamour'd consecrates to never-dying fame.

LIX.

Of late, with cumbersome, though pompous show,
Edwin would oft his flowery rhyme deface,
Through ardour to adorn ; but Nature now
To his experienced eye a modest grace
Presents, where ornament the second place
Holds, to intrinsic worth and just design
Subservient still. Simplicity apace
Tempers his rage, he owns her charm divine,
And clears the ambiguous phrase, and lops the un-
wieldy line.

LX.

Fain would I sing (much yet unsung remains)
What sweet delirium o'er his bosom stole,
When the great shepherd of the Mantuan plains ⁶
His deep majestic melody 'gan roll :
Fain would I sing what transport storm'd his soul,
How the red current throb'd his veins along,
When, like Pelides, bold beyond control,
Without art graceful, without effort strong,
Homer raised high to Heaven the loud, the impetuous
song :

LXI.

And how his lyre, though rude her first essays,
Now skill'd to soothe, to triumph, to complain,
Warbling at will through each harmonious maze,
Was taught to modulate the artful strain,—
I fain would sing :—but ah ! I strive in vain.
Sighs from a breaking heart my voice confound.
With trembling step, to join yon weeping train,
I haste, where gleams funereal glare around,
And mix'd with shrieks of woe, the knells of death
resound.

LXII.

Adieu, ye lays, that Fancy's flowers adorn,
The soft amusement of the vacant mind !
He sleeps in dust, and all the Muses mourn,
He, whom each virtue fired, each grace refined,
Friend, teacher, pattern, darling of mankind !
He sleeps in dust.⁷ Ah, how shall I pursue
My theme ? To heart-consuming grief resign'd,
Here on his recent grave I fix my view,
And pour my bitter tears. Ye flowery lays, adieu !

LXIII.

Art thou, my GREGORY, for ever fled ?
And am I left to unavailing woe ?
When fortune's storms assail this weary head,
Where cares long since have shed untimely snow ;
Ah, now for comfort whither shall I go ?
No more thy soothing voice my anguish cheers :
Thy placid eyes with smiles no longer glow,
My hopes to cherish, and allay my fears.
'Tis meet that I should mourn : flow forth afresh,
my tears !

NOTES TO BOOK II.

1 See Plato's *Timæus*.

2 How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank !
Shakespeare.

3 Plutarch.

4 The influence of the philosophic spirit, in humanizing the mind, and preparing it for intellectual exertion and delicate pleasure ;—in exploring, by the help of geometry, the system of the universe ;—in banishing superstition ;—in promoting navigation, agriculture, medicine, and moral and political science.

5 General ideas of excellence, the immediate archetypes of sublime imitation, both in painting and in poetry. See Aristotle's *Poetics*, and the *Discourses* of Sir Joshua Reynolds.

6 Virgil.

7 This excellent person died suddenly on the 10th of February, 1773. The conclusion of the poem was written a few days after.



ODE TO HOPE.

I. 1.

O THOU, who glad'st the pensive soul
More than Aurora's smile the swain forlorn,
Left all night long to mourn
Where desolation frowns, and tempests howl;
And shrieks of woe, as intermits the storm,
Far o'er the monstrous wilderness resound,
And 'cross the gloom darts many a shapeless form,
And many a fire-eyed visage glares around.
O come, and be once more my guest :
Come, for thou oft thy suppliant's vow hast heard,
And oft with smiles indulgent cheer'd
And soothed him into rest.

I. 2.

Smit by thy rapture-beaming eye
Deep-flashing through the midnight of their mind,
The sable bards combined,
Where Fear's black banner bloats the troubled sky,
Appall'd retire. Suspicion hides her head,
Nor dares the obliquely gleaming eyeball raise;
Despair, with gorgon-figured veil o'erspread,
Speeds to dark Phlegethon's detested maze.
Lo, startled at the heavenly ray,
With speed unwonted Indolence upsprings,
And, heaving, lifts her leaden wings,
And sullen glides away!

I. 3.

Ten thousand forms, by pining Fancy view'd,
Dissolve.—Above the sparkling flood
When Phœbus rears his awful brow,
From lengthening lawn and valley low
The troops of fen-born mists retire.
Along the plain
The joyous swain
Eyes the gay villages again,
And gold-illumined spire ;
While on the billowy ether borne,
Floats the loose lay's jovial measure ;
And light along the fairy Pleasure,
Her green robes glittering to the morn,
Wantons on silken wing. And goblins all
To the damp dungeon shrink, or hoary hall,
Or westward, with impetuous flight,
Shoot to the desert realms of their congenial night.

II. 1.

When first on childhood's eager gaze
Life's varied landscape, stretch'd immense around,
Starts out of night profound,
Thy voice incites to tempt the untrodden maze.
Fond he surveys thy mild maternal face,
His bashful eye still kindling as he views,
And, while thy lenient arm supports his pace,
With beating heart the upland path pursues ;
The path that leads, where, hung sublime,
And seen afar, youth's gallant trophies, bright
In Fancy's rainbow ray, invite
His wingy nerves to climb.

II. 2.

Pursue thy pleasurable way,
 Safe in the guidance of thy heavenly guard,
 While melting airs are heard
 And soft-eyed cherub forms around thee play:
 Simplicity, in careless flowers array'd,
 Prattling amusive in his accent meek;
 And Modesty, half turning as afraid,
 The smile just dimpling on his glowing cheek!
 Content and Leisure, hand in hand
 With Innocence and Peace, advance, and sing;
 And Mirth, in many a mazy ring,
 Frisks o'er the flowery land.

II. 3.

Frail man, how various is thy lot below!
 To-day though gales propitious blow,
 And Peace, soft gliding down the sky,
 Lead Love along, and Harmony;
 To-morrow the gay scene deforms:
 Then all around
 The thunder's sound
 Rolls rattling on through heaven's profound,
 And down rush all the storms.
 Ye days, that balmy influence shed,
 When sweet childhood, ever sprightly,
 In paths of pleasure sported lightly,
 Whither, ah whither are ye fled?
 Ye cherub train, that brought him on his way,
 O leave him not midst tumult and dismay;
 For now youth's eminence he gains:
 But what a weary length of lingering toil remains!

III. 1.

They shrink, they vanish into air :
Now Slander taints with pestilence the gale ;
And mingling cries assail,
The wail of Woe, and groan of grim Despair.
Lo, wizard Envy from his serpent eye
Darts quick destruction in each baleful glance ;
Pride smiling stern, and yellow Jealousy,
Frowning Disdain, and haggard Hate advance.
Behold, amidst the dire array,
Pale wither'd Care his giant-stature rears,
And lo, his iron hand prepares
To grasp its feeble prey.

III. 2.

Who now will guard bewilder'd youth
Safe from the fierce assault of hostile rage ?
Such war can Virtue wage,
Virtue, that bears the sacred shield of Truth ?
Alas ! full oft on Guilt's victorious car,
The spoils of Virtue are in triumph borne ;
While the fair captive, mark'd with many a scar,
In long obscurity, oppress'd, forlorn,
Resigns to tears her angel form.
Ill-fated youth, then whither wilt thou fly ?
No friend, no shelter now is nigh,
And onward rolls the storm.

III. 3.

But whence the sudden beam that shoots along ?
Why shrink aghast the hostile throng ?
Lo, from amidst affliction's night,
Hope bursts all radiant on the sight :

Her words the troubled bosom soothe :—
' Why thus dismay'd ?
Though foes invade,
Hope ne'er is wanting to their aid,
Who tread the path of truth.
'Tis I, who smoothe the rugged way,
I, who close the eyes of Sorrow,
And with glad visions of to-morrow
Repair the weary soul's decay.
When Death's cold touch thrills to the freezing heart,
Dreams of heaven's opening glories I impart,
Till the freed spirit springs on high
In rapture too severe for weak mortality.'

E L E G Y.

STILL shall unthinking man substantial deem
The forms that fleet through life's deceitful dream;
Till at some stroke of Fate the vision flies,
And sad realities in prospect rise;
And, from Elysian slumbers rudely torn,
The startled soul awakes, to think and mourn?

O ye, whose hours in jocund train advance,
Whose spirits to the song of gladness dance,
Who flowery plains in endless pomp survey,
Glittering in beams of visionary day;
O yet, while Fate delays the impending woe,
Be roused to thought, anticipate the blow;
Lest, like the lightning's glance, the sudden ill
Flash to confound, and penetrate to kill;
Lest, thus encompass'd with funereal gloom,
Like me, ye bend o'er some untimely tomb,
Pour your wild ravings in Night's frightened ear,
And half pronounce Heaven's sacred doom severe.

Wise, beauteous, good! O every grace combined,
That charms the eye, or captivates the mind!
Fresh, as the floweret opening on the morn,
Whose leaves bright drops of liquid pearl adorn!
Sweet, as the downy-pinion'd gale, that roves
To gather fragrance in Arabian groves!
Mild, as the melodies at close of day,
That, heard remote, along the vale decay!
Yet, why with these compared? What tints so fine,
What sweetness, mildness, can be match'd with
thine?

Why roam abroad, since recollection true
Restores the lovely form to fancy's view ?
Still let me gaze, and every care beguile,
Gaze on that cheek, where all the Graces smile;
That soul-expressing eye, benignly bright,
Where Meekness beams ineffable delight;
That brow, where Wisdom sits enthroned serene,
Each feature forms, and dignifies the mien.
Still let me listen, while her words impart
The sweet effusions of the blameless heart,
Till all my soul, each tumult charm'd away,
Yields, gently led, to Virtue's easy sway.

By thee inspired, O Virtue, age is young,
And music warbles from the faltering tongue:
Thy ray creative cheers the clouded brow,
And decks the faded cheek with rosy glow,
Brightens the joyless aspect, and supplies
Pure heavenly lustre to the languid eyes:
But when youth's living bloom reflects thy beams,
Resistless on the view the glory streams;
Love, wonder, joy, alternately alarm,
And beauty dazzles with angelic charm.

Ah, whither fled? ye dear illusions, stay!
Lo, pale and silent lies the lovely clay.
How are the roses on that cheek decay'd,
Which late the purple light of youth display'd!
Health on her form each sprightly grace bestow'd:
With life and thought each speaking feature glow'd.
Fair was the blossom, soft the vernal sky;
Elate with hope, we deem'd no tempest nigh:
When, lo, a whirlwind's instantaneous gust
Left all its beauties withering in the dust.

Cold the soft hand, that soothed Woe's weary head;
And quench'd the eye, the pitying tear that shed;

And mute the voice, whose pleasing accents stole,
Infusing balm, into the rankled soul.

O Death, why arm with cruelty thy power,
And spare the idle weed, yet lop the flower?
Why fly thy shafts in lawless error driven?
Is Virtue then no more the care of Heaven?
But peace, bold thought! be still, my bursting heart!
We, not Eliza, felt the fatal dart.

Escaped the dungeon, does the slave complain,
Nor bless the friendly hand that broke the chain?
Say, pines not Virtue for the lingering morn,
On this dark wild condemn'd to roam forlorn;
Where Reason's meteor-rays, with sickly glow,
O'er the dun gloom a dreadful glimmering throw;
Disclosing dubious to the affrighted eye
O'erwhelming mountains tottering from on high,
Black billowy deeps in storms perpetual toss'd,
And weary ways in wildering labyrinths lost?
O happy stroke, that, burst the bonds of clay,
Darts through the rending gloom the blaze of day,
And wings the soul with boundless flight to soar,
Where dangers threat and fears alarm no more!

Transporting thought! here let me wipe away
The tear of Grief, and wake a bolder lay.
But ah! the swimming eye o'erflows anew;
Nor check the sacred drops to Pity due.
Lo, where in speechless, hopeless anguish, bend
O'er her loved dust, the parent, brother, friend!
How vain the hope of man! but cease thy strain,
Nor sorrow's dread solemnity profane:
Mix'd with you drooping mourners, on her bier
In silence shed the sympathetic tear.


THE HERMIT.

THE HERMIT.

At the close of the day, when the hamlet is still,
And mortals the sweets of forgetfulness prove,
When naught but the torrent is heard on the hill,
And naught but the nightingale's song in the grove :
'Twas thus, by the cave of the mountain afar,
While his harp rung symphonious, a hermit began ;
No more with himself or with nature at war,
He thought as a sage, though he felt as a man.

' Ah ! why, all abandon'd to darkness and woe,
Why, lone Philomela, that languishing fall ?
For spring shall return, and a lover bestow,
And sorrow no longer thy bosom enthrall.
But, if pity inspire thee, renew the sad lay ;
Mourn, sweetest complainer, man calls thee to
mourn ;
O soothe him, whose pleasures like thine pass away :
Full quickly they pass—but they never return.

' Now gliding remote, on the verge of the sky,
The Moon half extinguish'd her crescent displays :
But lately I mark'd, when majestic on high
She shone, and the planets were lost in her blaze.
Roll on, thou fair orb, and with gladness pursue
The path that conducts thee to splendour again.
But man's faded glory what change shall renew ?
Ah, fool ! to exult in a glory so vain !



' 'Tis night, and the landscape is lovely no more ;
I mourn, but, ye woodlands, I mourn not for you ;
For morn is approaching, your charms to restore,
Perfumed with fresh fragrance, and glittering with
dew :

Nor yet for the ravage of winter I mourn ;
Kind Nature the embryo blossom will save :
But when shall spring visit the mouldering urn ?
O when shall it dawn on the night of the grave ?

' 'Twas thus, by the glare of false science betray'd,
That leads to bewilder, and dazzles to blind,
My thoughts wont to roam, from shade onward to
shade,

Destruction before me, and sorrow behind.

" O pity, great Father of Light !" then I cried,
" Thy creature, who fain would not wander from
thee :

Lo, humbled in dust, I relinquish my pride :
From doubt and from darkness thou only canst free."

' And darkness and doubt are now flying away ;
No longer I roam in conjecture forlorn :
So breaks on the traveller, faint, and astray,
The bright and the balmy effulgence of morn.
See Truth, Love, and Mercy, in triumph descending,
And Nature, all glowing in Eden's first bloom !
On the cold cheek of Death smiles and roses are
blending,
And Beauty immortal awakes from the tomb.'

RETIREMENT.

WHEN in the crimson cloud of even
The lingering light decays,
And Hesper on the front of heaven
His glittering gem displays ;
Deep in the silent vale, unseen,
Beside a lulling stream,
A pensive youth, of placid mien,
Indulged this tender theme :

‘ Ye cliffs, in hoary grandeur piled
High o’er the glimmering dale ;
Ye woods, along whose windings wild
Murmurs the solemn gale :
Where Melancholy strays forlorn,
And Woe retires to weep,
What time the wan Moon’s yellow horn
Gleams on the western deep .

‘ To you, ye wastes, whose artless charms
Ne’er drew ambition’s eye,
‘Scaped a tumultuous world’s alarms,
To your retreats I fly.
Deep in your most sequester’d bower
Let me at last recline,
Where Solitude, mild, modest power,
Leans on her ivied shrine.

‘ How shall I woo thee, matchless fair ?
Thy heavenly smile how win ?
Thy smile, that smoothes the brow of Care,
And stills the storm within.
O wilt thou to thy favourite grove
Thine ardent votary bring,
And bless his hours, and bid them move
Serene, on silent wing ?

‘ Oft let Remembrance soothe his mind
With dreams of former days,
When in the lap of Peace reclined,
He framed his infant lays ;
When Fancy roved at large, nor Care
Nor cold Distrust alarm’d,
Nor Envy with malignant glare
His simple youth had harm’d.

‘ ‘Twas then, O Solitude ! to thee
His early vows were paid,
From heart sincere, and warm, and free,
Devoted to the shade.
Ah, why did Fate his steps decoy
In stormy paths to roam,
Remote from all congenial joy ?—
O take the wanderer home.

‘ Thy shades, thy silence now be mine,
Thy charms my only theme ;
My haunt the hollow cliff, whose pine
Waves o’er the gloomy stream ;
Whence the scared owl on pinions gray
Breaks from the rustling boughs,
And down the lone vale sails away
To more profound repose.

‘ O, while to thee the woodland pours
Its wildly warbling song,
And balmy from the bank of flowers
The Zephyr breathes along;
Let no rude sound invade from far,
No vagrant foot be nigh,
No ray from Grandeur’s gilded car
Flash on the startled eye.

‘ But if some pilgrim through the glade
Thy hallow’d bowers explore,
O guard from harm his hoary head,
And listen to his lore;
For he of joys divine shall tell,
That wean from earthly woe,
And triumph o’er the mighty spell
That chains his heart below.

‘ For me, no more the path invites
Ambition loves to tread;
No more I climb those toilsome heights,
By guileful Hope misled;
Leaps my fond fluttering heart no more
To Mirth’s enlivening strain;
For present pleasure soon is o’er,
And all the past is vain.’

THE HARES.

A FABLE.

Yes, yes, I grant the sons of Earth
Are doom'd to trouble from their birth.
We all of sorrow have our share ;
But say, is yours without compare ?
Look round the world ; perhaps you 'll find
Each individual of our kind
Press'd with an equal load of ill ;
Equal at least. Look further still,
And own your lamentable case
Is little short of happiness.

In yonder hut that stands alone,
Attend to Famine's feeble moan ;
Or view the couch where Sickness lies,
Mark his pale cheek, and languid eyes ;
His frame, by strong convulsion torn ;
His struggling sighs, and looks forlorn.
Or see, transfix'd with keener pangs,
Where o'er his hoard the miser hangs :
Whistles the wind ; he starts, he stares,
Nor Slumber's balmy blessing shares ;
Despair, Remorse, and Terror roll
Their tempests on his harass'd soul.

But here perhaps it may avail
To enforce our reasoning with a tale.

Mild was the morn, the sky serene,
The jolly hunting band convene,

The beagle's breast with ardour burns,
The bounding steed the champaign spurns,
And Fancy oft the game describes
Through the hound's nose, and huntsman's eyes.

Just then, a council of the hares
Had met, on national affairs.
The chiefs were set ; while o'er their head
The furze its frizzled covering spread.
Long lists of grievances were heard,
And general discontent appear'd.
' Our harmless race shall every savage,
Both quadruped and biped, ravage ?
Shall horses, hounds, and hunters still
Unite their wits to work us ill ?
The youth, his parent's sole delight,
Whose tooth the dewy lawns invite,
Whose pulse in every vein beats strong,
Whose limbs leap light the vales along,
May yet ere noontide meet his death,
And lie dismember'd on the heath.
For youth, alas ! nor cautious age,
Nor strength, nor speed, eludes their rage.
In every field we meet the foe,
Each gale comes fraught with sounds of woe ;
The morning but awakes our fears,
The evening sees us bathed in tears.
But must we ever idly grieve,
Nor strive our fortunes to relieve ?
Small is each individual's force :
To stratagem be our recourse ;
And then, from all our tribes combined,
The murderer to his cost may find
No foes are weak, whom Justice arms,
Whom Concord leads, and Hatred warms.

Be roused ; or liberty acquire,
Or in the great attempt expire.'
He said no more ; for in his breast
Conflicting thoughts the voice suppress'd :
The fire of vengeance seem'd to stream
From his swoln eyeball's yellow gleam.

And now the tumults of the war,
Mingling confusedly from afar,
Swell in the wind. Now louder cries
Distinct of hounds and men arise.
Forth from the brake, with beating heart,
The assembled hares tumultuous start,
And, every straining nerve on wing,
Away precipitately spring.
The hunting band, a signal given,
Thick thundering o'er the plain are driven ;
O'er cliff abrupt, and shrubby mound,
And river broad, impetuous bound ;
Now plunge amid the forest shades,
Glance through the openings of the glades ;
Now o'er the level valley sweep,
Now with short steps strain up the steep ;
While backward from the hunter's eyes
The landscape like a torrent flies.
At last an ancient wood they gain'd,
By pruner's axe yet unprofaned.
High o'er the rest, by Nature rear'd,
'The oak's majestic boughs appear'd ;
Beneath, a copse of various hue
In barbarous luxuriance grew.
No knife had curb'd the rambling sprays,
No hand had wove the implicit maze.
'The flowering thorn, self-taught to wind,
'The hazel's stubborn stem entwined,

And bramble twigs were wreathed around,
And rough furze crept along the ground.
Here sheltering from the sons of murder,
The hares drag their tired limbs no further.

But lo, the western wind ere long
Was loud, and roar'd the woods among ;
From rustling leaves, and crashing boughs,
The sound of woe and war arose.
The hares distracted scour the grove,
As terror and amazement drove ;
But danger, wheresoe'er they fled,
Still seem'd impending o'er their head.
Now crowded in a grotto's gloom,
All hope extinct, they wait their doom.
Dire was the silence, till, at length,
Ev'n from despair deriving strength,
With bloody eye and furious look,
A daring youth arose and spoke :

' O wretched race, the scorn of Fate,
Whom ills of every sort await !
O, cursed with keenest sense to feel
The sharpest sting of every ill !
Say ye, who, fraught with mighty scheme,
Of liberty and vengeance dream,
What now remains ? To what recess
Shall we our weary steps address,
Since Fate is evermore pursuing
All ways and means to work our ruin ?
Are we alone, of all beneath,
Condemn'd to misery worse than death ?
Must we, with fruitless labour, strive
In misery worse than death to live ?
No. Be the smaller ill our choice ;
So dictates Nature's powerful voice.

Death's pang will in a moment cease,
And then, All hail, eternal peace !'
Thus, while he spoke, his words impart
The dire resolve to every heart.

A distant lake in prospect lay,
That, glittering in the solar ray,
Gleam'd through the dusky trees, and shot
A trembling light along the grot.
Thither with one consent they bend,
Their sorrows with their lives to end,
While each, in thought, already hears
The water hissing in his ears.
Fast by the margin of the lake,
Conceal'd within a thorny brake,
A linnet sate, whose careless lay
Amused the solitary day :
Careless he sung, for on his breast
Sorrow no lasting trace impress'd ;
When suddenly he heard a sound
Of swift feet traversing the ground.
Quick to the neighbouring tree he flies,
Thence trembling casts around his eyes :
No foe appear'd, his fears were vain ;
Pleased he renews the sprightly strain.

'The hares, whose noise had caused his fright,
Saw with surprise the linnet's flight.
'Is there on earth a wretch,' they said,
'Whom our approach can strike with dread ?'
An instantaneous change of thought
To tumult every bosom wrought.
So fares the system-building sage,
Who, plodding on from youth to age,
At last on some foundation-dream
Has rear'd aloft his goodly scheme,

And proved his predecessors fools,
And bound all nature by his rules ;
So fares he in that dreadful hour,
When injured Truth exerts her power,
Some new phenomenon to raise,
Which, bursting on his frightened gaze,
From its proud summit to the ground
Proves the whole edifice unsound.

‘ Children,’ thus spoke a hare sedate,
Who oft had known the extremes of fate,
‘ In slight events the docile mind
May hints of good instruction find.
That our condition is the worst,
And we with such misfortunes curst
As all comparison defy,
Was late the universal cry ;
When lo, an accident so slight
As yonder little linnet’s flight,
Has made your stubborn heart confess
(So your amazement bids me guess)
That all our load of woes and fears
Is but a part of what he bears.
Where can he rest secure from harms,
Whom ev’n a helpless hare alarms ?
Yet he repines not at his lot ;
When past, the danger is forgot :
On yonder bough he trims his wings,
And with unusual rapture sings :
While we, less wretched, sink beneath
Our lighter ills, and rush to death.
No more of this unmeaning rage,
But hear, my friends, the words of age :
‘ When, by the winds of autumn driven,
The scatter’d clouds fly cross the heaven,

Oft have we, from some mountain's head,
Beheld the alternate light and shade
Sweep the long vale. Here, hovering, lowers
The shadowy cloud ; there downward pours,
Streaming direct, a flood of day,
Which from the view flies swift away ;
It flies, while other shades advance,
And other streaks of sunshine glance.
Thus chequer'd is the life below
With gleams of joy and clouds of woe.
Then hope not, while we journey on,
Still to be basking in the sun ;
Nor fear, though now in shades ye mourn,
That sunshine will no more return.
If, by your terrors overcome,
Ye fly before the approaching gloom,
The rapid clouds your flight pursue,
And darkness still o'ercasts your view.
Who longs to reach the radiant plain
Must onward urge his course amain ;
For doubly swift the shadow flies,
When 'gainst the gale the pilgrim plies.
At least be firm, and undismay'd
Maintain your ground ! the fleeting shade
Ere long spontaneous glides away,
And gives you back the enlivening ray.
Lo, while I speak, our danger past !
No more the shrill horn's angry blast
Howls in our ear : the savage roar
Of war and murder is no more.
Then snatch the moment fate allows,
Nor think of past or future woes.'
He spoke, and hope revives ; the lake
That instant one and all forsake,

In sweet amusement to employ
The present sprightly hour of joy.

Now from the western mountain's brow,
Compass'd with clouds of various glow,
The sun a broader orb displays,
And shoots aslope his ruddy rays :
The lawn assumes a fresher green,
And dew-drops spangle all the scene.
The balmy zephyr breathes along,
The shepherd sings his tender song,
With all their lays the groves resound,
And falling waters murmur round :
Discord and care were put to flight,
And all was peace, and calm delight.

EPITAPH,

INTENDED FOR HIMSELF.

ESCAPED the gloom of mortal life, a soul
Here leaves its mouldering tenement of clay,
Safe, where no cares their whelming billows roll,
No doubts bewilder, and no hopes betray.

Like thee, I once have stemm'd the sea of life ;
Like thee, have languish'd after empty joys ;
Like thee, have labour'd in the stormy strife ;
Been grieved for trifles, and amused with toys.

Yet, for awhile, 'gainst Passion's threatful blast
Let steady Reason urge the struggling oar ;
Shot through the dreary gloom, the morn at last
Gives to thy longing eye the blissful shore.

Forget my frailties, thou art also frail ;
Forgive my lapses, for thyself mayst fall ;
Nor read, unmoved, my artless, tender tale :
I was a friend, O man ! to thee, to all.





